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Official Records

10th PLENARY MEETING

30 September 1993
at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

EARTHQUAKE IN INDIA

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of all the members of the Assembly, may I extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of India for the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage which have resulted from the earthquake that struck India recently. May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

Mr. ANSARI (India): On behalf of the people and the Government of India, and especially of those affected by the terrible earthquake that hit south-western India on the night of 30 September, I should like to express our profound gratitude and appreciation for the very kind words of sympathy and condolence that you, Sir, expressed on behalf of this body.

The earthquake that hit the region of Sholapur, some 240 miles south-east of Bombay, has brought death and destruction to the lives of thousands of families. The estimated death-toll at the moment is over 6,000, with multitudes of others injured and rendered homeless by the devastation.

Natural disasters know no boundaries. Their wrath and fury do not make a distinction between developed and developing or between the rich and the poor. Such disasters cannot be totally avoided. However, closer cooperation between all members of the international community on the exchange of information would mitigate the consequences of natural disasters. India, for its part, is fully committed to this task.

Your message of condolence, Sir, will bring healing, succor and hope to the grieving multitudes that have been so profoundly affected by the earthquake. It will strengthen their resolve to rebuild their lives.

ADDRESS BY MR. KIRO GLIGOROV, PRESIDENT OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Mr. Kiro Gligorov, President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, His Excellency Mr. Kiro Gligorov, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President GLIGOROV: At the outset, it is my pleasure to extend to you, Sir, my sincere felicitations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. In discharging your important duties, you can count on the support and cooperation of my delegation. Your wide experience and diplomatic skills are a valuable asset for the success of this important session of the General Assembly.

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(*spoke in Macedonian; English text furnished by the delegation*)

This is the first time that my country, the Republic of Macedonia, is attending a session of the General Assembly as an independent State committed to making its full contribution to the enhancement of world peace and the promotion of internationalcooperation.

The Republic of Macedonia is a country with foreign policies based on the principles of peace, friendship and cooperation. We see the interdependence of interests and mutual respect as the future of successful international cooperation. An important element of our foreign policy is to promote good-neighbourly relations and to incorporate the principles of the new European architecture in the crisis-ridden region of the Balkans. Such a foreign policy is consistent with the internal development of the Republic of Macedonia, which is oriented towards a market economy, democracy, a State of law, human rights and harmony in inter-ethnic relations.

By attaining its independence in a peaceful and legitimate manner, the Republic of Macedonia has kept the peace and forestalled a spill-over of the war into the southern Balkans. The comprehensive efforts of the past two years have changed our historic position from a bone of contention to a factor for peace and stability in the Balkans. Pursuant to this, the endeavours of the delegation of the Republic of Macedonia in the course of this session will be aimed at strict compliance with the United Nations Charter; support for all measures that enhance international peace and security; the democratization of international relations in all spheres; the advancement of human rights and freedoms to the utmost degree; the promotion and development of a policy of good-neighbourly relations; forestalling the proliferation and use of weapons of mass destruction; and the enhancement of preventive diplomacy in settling disputes.

The adverse situation of the world today is a source of concern to all of us. We are not fully satisfied with the efforts of our Organization nor especially with the results it has achieved in resolving current sources of tension. We accept the assertion that the world today is not threatened by a new world war and that the use of nuclear arms is not very likely. But the fact remains that the number of serious and potential military conflicts is increasing. The efforts of our Organization to find peaceful solutions have been enormous. Regrettably, the results have not always been productive, owing to a certain extent to the absence of a wider implementation of preventive diplomatic measures and activities.

I take this opportunity to emphasize the extraordinary significance of the historical accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization for peace in the Middle East and the development of world relations. All those who have contributed to its signing deserve our special recognition.

In this context, I am deeply convinced that, despite all difficulties, we will soon be speaking of South Africa as a region of successful development and human dignity. Let us hope that the forces of peace in that region will ultimately prevail over the forces of regression and apartheid.

I must reiterate our deep concern over the perpetuation of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the threat of a spill-over and a wider destabilization of our region. In dead earnest we, a country situated in the immediate vicinity, see this as the threat of an all-out Balkan war. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is extremely grave, tragic and incomprehensible. The most terrible post-cold-war drama is unfolding in the heart of Europe: massive killings, massive destruction, over 2 million refugees, insane acts of ethnic cleansing and genocide. Numerous international conferences and activities have been undertaken in order to bring an end to this war. The Security Council has adopted numerous resolutions. Let us all hope that peace in Bosnia will finally become a reality.

An end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a first and essential step. However, permanent peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be possible without compliance with, and upholding of, the fundamental principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the principles of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), namely that borders cannot be changed by force; that the international community does not recognize or accept "ethnic cleansing"; and that the rights of minorities must be respected.

Without these preconditions, not only will permanent peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina be impossible, but a precedent will be set which will incite new conflicts. To condone the use of force and military superiority for territorial expansion and redrawn borders would exacerbate other, less heated, tensions, especially in the ethnically mixed Balkans and the countries of Eastern Europe. It would in fact mean condoning the potential for permanent inter-ethnic wars.

The Republic of Macedonia is vitally interested in seeing an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, forestalling a spill-over and attaining peace on lasting foundations. For these reasons, and out of concern for our own security and for peace and stability in the region, we have undertaken a number of timely preventive measures in cooperation with the United Nations. In this context, I would like to stress the key role played by Security Council resolution 795 (1992) of December 1992 for the deployment of a contingent from the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the Republic of Macedonia.

The decision of the Security Council, to which the Secretary- General made a great contribution, has proved to be justified, timely and efficient. It has demonstrated the enormous advantages of preventive diplomacy. The peace-keeping forces of the United Nations, strengthened by the United States contingent, are of great importance for our security and for sustaining peace and stability in the region. Our cooperation with these forces is exemplary, and it will remain so in the future. This step has greatly increased the feelings of security and trust in the peace-keeping activities of the United Nations on the part of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia.

As a country and as a people, our permanent interest lies in peace and cooperation in the Balkans. In the same spirit, our efforts are aimed at establishing good-neighbourly relations with all our neighbours and at resolving all existing problems with our southern neighbour. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the implementation of United Nations sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, and the remains of bloc divisions prevalent until recently prevent the Balkans from functioning on natural regional principles. Economic and cultural ties, communications, the free flow of people, goods and ideas have practically been severed. This is indeed a depressing situation. In order to prepare for the twenty-first century and a Europe of open borders and cooperation, it is essential that the Balkans undergo major changes. This is in the interest of all the peoples and all the countries in this region. Those are the reasons why Macedonia has adopted policies of good-neighbourly relations, peaceful settlement of problems and development of overall economic, political and cultural cooperation among the countries of the Balkans. We are truly convinced that, in the interest of peace and stability, the international community will ardently support these processes in the Balkans. The principles of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and the processes within the European Community are the only options for peace, stability and economic revival in the Balkans. However, this also implies that all the Balkan States, which have chosen the European option, must be enabled to achieve gradual integration into the European Community.

We are all dissatisfied with the stagnation of the world economy in the past year, the deterioration of the economic situation in the world, and the economic situation in certain countries and regions. The number of people affected by unemployment, poverty and hunger is on the rise. For developed countries, recovery from the recession has been slower than expected, hindering their increased participation in the development of the developing countries and countries in transition.

Because of this situation, and because of our firm conviction that the period after the cold war must not grow into a period of economic conflicts, we believe that much more can be done to seek a way out of the world's current economic and social difficulties. In this context, I am convinced that the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly will serve as firm encouragement for an increase in world demand and for liberalization of world trade. A very important prerequisite for the realization of this goal is the successful outcome of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, encouraged by the Tokyo summit. It is also essential to resolve the issue of arrears and that of access by developing countries and countries in transition to international financial markets. All of these activities support the view that only development generates new development, while stagnation brings only regression and poverty.

Enhanced protection of human rights is justifiably receiving greater priority in the work of our Organization. We are concerned by the fact that in the past year, violations of human rights have reached epidemic proportions. We feel that the Vienna Conference on Human Rights is a very positive step in the right direction, and we hope that the Declaration and Action Programme adopted at that Conference will contribute greatly to ending the unfavourable developments in this area today.

The negotiations in Vienna have clearly shown that current mechanisms for implementing existing human-rights instruments are not efficient, and that much improvement is needed, particularly in the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. A significant step in this direction has been taken by the adoption last year of the Declaration on minorities. The next steps which our delegation will support are the commencement of operations of the Commission on Human Rights according to the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, and an examination of the need for setting up a United Nations high commission for minorities, with headquarters in Geneva.

I would like to point out that all unresolved issues involving ethnic minorities can well lead to future military conflicts, particularly in certain regions of the world, thus endangering international peace. Hence it is essential to take immediate preventive measures in this area as well.

The Republic of Macedonia is a European country in transition, a landlocked country, a country of transit and a developing country. These factors contribute to the economic difficulties of my country. The situation is further complicated by the consequences of the United Nations sanctions imposed on Serbia and Montenegro. I would immediately like to emphasize that we have strictly complied with the implementation of the sanctions. As a result, this year alone, our gross national product has been cut in half. External trade has been reduced considerably, transport costs have increased immensely, and other indirect damage has occurred as well.

Today, the survival, democracy and economic development of the Republic of Macedonia are fundamentally dependent on assistance from the international community. Otherwise, it is very possible that social tensions, and the probable collapse of the economy, will bring about a new crisis spot. I am deeply convinced that, in accordance with Article 50 of the Charter and Security Council resolution 820 (1993), the United Nations and the Security Council will be in a position to provide us with concrete forms of assistance.

It is inconceivable to expect a small country to bear the damage of an international action of this type on its own, without solidarity and timely assistance. Aid should be provided now as a preventive measure, instead of after the outbreak of those likely social clashes which may grow into new conflicts.

In this spirit, the delegation of the Republic of Macedonia at this session will lay out our direct proposals regarding the problem of compensation for damage incurred as a result of implementing the sanctions, the problems deriving from the position of landlocked countries, and other issues related to peace and cooperation.

The strengthening of the United Nations in all aspects, in the post-cold-war period, is of vital importance to the Republic of Macedonia. My country belongs to a group of countries that can survive and develop only in conditions without war, in a world where peace and stability are not threatened, where international cooperation will be conducted without obstacles and discrimination, and a world where everyone will have respect for human dignity.

In this context, the delegation of the Republic of Macedonia will make its full contribution to the successful work of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly and to strengthening the Organization.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the statement he has just made.

President Gligorov of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. EMOMALI RAKHMONOV, CHAIRMAN OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Emomali Rakhmonov, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

Chairman RAKHMONOV (Tajikistan) *(interpretation from Russian)*: The year that has elapsed since the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly was noteworthy for the further growth in the authority and the effectiveness of the United Nations. It testifies, in our view, to the deep understanding that the members of the world community have about the need for close, constructive cooperation in the name of a better future. As I look around this Hall, in which, for the first time, a Head of State of a sovereign Tajikistan is speaking, the words of the great poet Saadi come to my mind:

"The sons of Man are but one body
For the Creator made us all from but one beginning".

Now that I find myself here, in the centre for settling the problems of the whole world, I should first of all like to congratulate Mr. Samuel Insanally, the Permanent Representative of Guyana, on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. Allow me to express the hope that this session, under your skilful leadership, Mr. President, will achieve tangible, successful results for the good of all mankind. I should also like to draw attention to the excellent work done by Mr. Stoyan Ganev, President of the General Assembly at its last session; Mr. Ganev both energetically and effectively guided the deliberations on complex political problems.

It is with great satisfaction that I greet Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and express to him our sincere gratitude for his tireless efforts to resolve the conflicts in various parts of the world, not excluding my own country.

The Republic of Tajikistan is taking its first steps as a subject of international law. It is with deep satisfaction that I note that we have been granted an equal voice in the commonwealth of nations, and we are aware that this honourable right imposes significant duties on us.

The two years of our independence, in addition to moments that are undoubtedly positive, have also entailed the harsh trials that my patient and peace-loving people are now going through. It is for the historians to study the root causes, the reasons for the situation in Tajikistan today. I think that my job is to point out just one thing: those whom we believe, on the basis of the law in force in the Republic of Tajikistan, to be guilty of unleashing civil war are guilty of grossly violating the very foundations of any modern society, namely the primacy of law.

As in any civil war, in the civil war in Tajikistan there can be no victors. Our urgent task as a nation is to heal, as quickly as possible, the bloody wounds that it has inflicted on our country.

The attention the community of nations is paying Tajikistan is understandable. Nor should we be surprised at the variety of opinions we hear when events in the Republic are being analysed. I should like to shed some necessary light on a number of issues.

Now that we have set out on the path of independent development, we have run up against the enormous political and socio-economic problems of the transitional period.

Our national economy was built up as just one small part of the enormous economic complex of the former USSR, and was basically a provider of raw materials. With the collapse of those economic ties, our Republic has come face to face with many almost insoluble problems. There has been a catastrophic drop in the standard of living, which could hardly fail to lead to an increase in social tension.

The power struggle that developed at the same time and the attempts to seize power illegally, by force and undemocratically, have split society apart and led to a senseless, fratricidal war. The results of this we know: thousands of broken lives, thousands of dead and wounded, refugees and missing. Immeasurable political, social and economic harm has been done to the Republic.

The internal instability has become the main reason for the economic and political chaos, the total legal confusion and the sharp drop in production. The future of our people - the future of Tajik statehood - has been put in jeopardy.

The sixteenth session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, which was held in these conditions, laid fundamentally new foundations for establishing peace and civil harmony in our country. The Supreme Council has decided in favour of solving all political, social and economic problems solely within the framework of the constitution. A number of important laws have been adopted that are designed to afford citizens social protection and to return them to their homes and peacetime jobs.

In accordance with the Constitution, we have elected a leadership for the Supreme Council and formed a Government. Today our society and our people have become aware that the highest power in the State should be the law, and only the law.

As the Head of State, I declare, from this rostrum, that we shall adhere to the fundamental principles of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference and the Paris Charter and other international instruments for the defence of law. We are determined to carry out democratic transformations in our country and to acknowledge and respect philosophical, religious, ideological and political choice as an inalienable right of the individual.

Working under the constant pressure of political and socio-economic problems, we have succeeded in a short time in removing the economic blockade from all the regions of the Republic and have begun rebuilding our destroyed national economy and instituting economic reforms in order gradually to introduce a free market.

From the beginning of the restoration of our Republic, our Parliament has adhered to the principle of the primacy of law, and in so doing has passed a number of measures, while the Presidium of the Supreme Council has laid down three special decrees on amnesty. Does not this show that we are acting to resolve through political means the problems that have accumulated in our country? We are prepared for dialogue with all the social forces in our country to achieve national reconciliation, civil harmony and stability in Tajikistan.

We would like to cooperate constructively with forces of any political orientation acting within the framework of existing law and respecting generally accepted principles of democracy. I would like to inform the world community that Tajikistan is actively working to improve its election laws and to prepare a draft new Constitution in which maximum attention will be given to all problems related to guaranteeing and protecting inalienable human rights.

In terms of settling our domestic political problems, we are seriously concerned over the attempts at regionalization of the internal conflict in Tajikistan, a conflict which is still going on in a number of areas along the Tajik-Afghan border. The outbreak of the conflict this summer brought dozens of deaths.

Allow me briefly to tell the Assembly my view of the essential reasons for the tensions along and inside the border.

Everyone knows that until recently Tajikistan had been systematically subjected to unprovoked acts of armed intervention from the territory of a neighbouring country. Naturally, we understand its internal difficulties related to establishing a centralized State administration. But facts cannot be denied, and we have now been faced with the need seriously to deal with the question of self-defence.

We are not hatching any hostile plan with regard to Afghanistan. The measures which we have taken and are taken to strengthen the defence of our border - which is also a border of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) - do not go beyond what is laid down in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and are fully in keeping with generally accepted norms of international relations.

But this, of course, does not mean that that is the only way to solve the problem. And here we are encouraged by the notable speed-up in the negotiating process with the authorities in Kabul. We have achieved a number of positive agreements on a broad spectrum of questions, including normalizing the situation along the Tajik-Afghan border. We think that a permanent, substantive dialogue with the leadership of the Islamic State of Afghanistan will help us remove some other well-known irritants.

It is most unfortunate that huge resources are still being spent to support destructive elements based on the territory of Afghanistan. Having gone there from Tajikistan, they are, with the help of extremist groups and the forces of international terrorism, hatching plans forcibly to change the State structure in our country. A legitimate question arises: is it not wiser to use these resources to build rather than to destroy?

Another of our problems is that of the Tajik refugees in Afghanistan. There are many versions of how they ended up on the territory of Afghanistan, but that is not the main point, which is that they should return to their homeland as quickly as possible. We express our sincere thanks to the Administration of Afghanistan and to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who are giving serious attention to those people. As of the middle of September, more than 35,000 Tajik refugees - more than half the total - had returned to their permanent homes from Afghanistan. We hope that the process of voluntary return will continue and that with the support of the authorities of Afghanistan and of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, we shall in the near future be able to put an end once and for all to this painful question.

We have already completed our preparation for signing a trilateral agreement between Tajikistan, Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We hope that the agreement will be signed as soon as possible.

From this United Nations rostrum, I should like to say one more thing in this regard. We are firmly convinced that the support of the Administration of Afghanistan in efforts to restore peace to the Afghan land, which has suffered so much, would be in the interests not only of that country but of the region and of the entire world. There was a time when some States spent a great deal of resources on war in Afghanistan. In my view, the time has come to help restore a peaceful life there. A restless, unstable Afghanistan is a threat - and not only to Tajikistan.

Regarding our participation in the CIS, I must emphasize that Tajikistan is in favour of strengthening the Commonwealth while observing full respect for the sovereignty and independence of its member States. In this context, I should like to point out the significance of two areas of our activities within the framework of the CIS, activities which are critically important for Tajikistan. I am talking about relations with Russia and with the Central Asian States.

Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, has undergone great trials in taking upon itself the maintenance of peace and stability in virtually all the space and territory of the former Soviet Union. Therefore, the peoples of the former Soviet Union, including Tajikistan, commend and welcome the peace-keeping efforts made by Russia.

A positive role in stabilizing the situation in our country has been played by the brotherly support of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Tajikistan also thanks the United States and all the other countries of Europe and Asia that extended the hand of assistance to us during terrible and dark days.

We hope that Tajikistan will quickly be removed from the blacklist of conflict areas. In this respect, we count upon the tangible assistance of the world community in restoring our national economy, which has been destroyed by war and by natural disasters. A country which is rich in natural resources, which has an attraction in terms of its economic prospects, needs purposeful assistance in order to be reborn. Allow me to express the hope that that assistance and that support will naturally, in accordance with generally accepted principles in world practice, be given to my country.

Tajikistan, which has gone through the horrors of a civil war, views with great concern the course of events in the hot spots of our planet. We know of the pain and suffering of the people of Somalia. We feel the full depth and senselessness of the tragedy of the peoples of the former Yugoslavia, the deadlocked events which have taken place in the Caucasus of the post-Soviet era. We also know firsthand how destructive is the force of local conflicts. That is why we make an urgent appeal to the world community to multiply its efforts to end, and to prevent, that type of conflict. We are firmly convinced that the force of arms, no matter how threatening and frightening they may be, cannot solve a single contentious issue.

In this connection, we are seriously concerned by the uncontrolled and unsanctioned trade in arms in areas of intense instability. Essentially, what is happening is a massive arming of entire regions. Indeed, we can imagine how unbelievably difficult it is to take away from a population weapons that they have illegally obtained. On the basis of our own bitter experience, we loudly speak out about the danger of that fateful trend.

Today, this destructive impact on our economy has been joined by another: the aspiration of a number of countries to acquire nuclear weapons or the technology to produce them. As a country which has the technology for mining and initially processing uranium, we categorically oppose the use of that priceless source of energy for non-peaceful purposes.

We state our unconditional support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and we hope that the conference of the States parties to that Treaty, scheduled for 1995, will decide to extend it indefinitely.

As the Assembly knows, the end of the cold war and bipolar confrontation gave rise to great hopes on the part of the peoples of the world. Unfortunately, events have not yet justified many of these hopes. None the less, there is one place in the world where notable political events have been observed. We are deeply satisfied with the historic agreements reached between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the State of Israel on mutual recognition.

We welcome the decision of the United States of America to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization, and we commend that great country for its role in supporting peace and stability on earth.

The questions which the General Assembly will be discussing at its forty-eighth session show that there is now an onward rush towards the interdependence of nations. In Tajikistan we are convinced of this.

We commend the peace-keeping and humanitarian efforts of the United Nations. We are especially proud of Tajikistan's initiative to include institutions of the Commonwealth of Nations in the broad peace-keeping activities on the territory of our country; that initiative has not been ignored.

The mandate for the presence in Tajikistan of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ismat Kittani, has been extended. The Republic has fruitfully worked with the United Nations Observer Mission, the representative of the High Commissioner for Refugees, and the representatives of other international non-governmental organizations.

Our special gratitude goes to the Security Council of the United Nations, which constantly monitors developments in the situation in and around Tajikistan. We sincerely hope that the efforts of the community of nations will be increasingly focused on ensuring the conditions for sustainable development.

We wholeheartedly support the principles and recommendations of Agenda 21. We feel that accomplishing that Agenda's important goals, such as the transfer of technology and resources, will have a favourable impact on disaster areas such as the Aral Sea and areas of great poverty.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Assembly that my people, who have now embarked upon establishing their own statehood and have overcome considerable difficulties in so doing, look to the future with a feeling of great and, I hope, justified optimism.

We will spare no effort, we shall use all our energy, in building a genuinely legal, democratic and enlightened State which will not fail to take a worthy place among the civilized countries of the world.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Emomali Rhakmonov, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Tajikistan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. ISAIAS AFWERKI, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ERITREA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the State of Eritrea.

Mr. Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the State of Eritrea, His Excellency Mr. Isaias Afwerki, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President AFWERKI: Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, upon your election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

I feel particularly privileged and honoured to address the General Assembly on behalf of a people that struggled for half a century to regain its fundamental human and national rights and that, despite the outright military victory it won, took the unprecedented step of organizing a free and fair referendum so as to join the community of independent States on the basis of its freely expressed wish and on solid legal grounds.

As I speak here today, I cannot help but remember the appeals we sent year in and out to the General Assembly and the States Members of the United Nations, describing the plight of our people and asking for legitimate sympathy, support and recognition. We appealed to the United Nations not only in its capacity as a representative of the international community, but also because of its special responsibility to Eritrea. For it was the United Nations that decided in 1950, at the beginning of the cold war, to deny the colonized people of Eritrea their right to self-determination, thereby sacrificing their national and human rights on the altar of the strategic interests of the super-Powers.

In adopting that resolution, the United Nations affirmed that it remained an international instrument which the General Assembly could be seized of at any time. But for the next 41 years, as a brutal war of aggression was conducted against the Eritrean people, initially with the active support of the United States and later with a much worse and massive involvement of the Soviet Union, and despite the repeated appeals of the Eritrean people, the United Nations refused to raise its voice in the defence of a people whose future it had unjustly decided and whom it had pledged to protect. Not once in 41 years did Eritrea, scene of the longest war in Africa, and victim of some of the grossest violations of human rights, figure in the agenda of the United Nations.

This deafening silence pained our people. It also gave a free hand to the aggressors, thereby prolonging our suffering and increasing the sacrifices we had to make.

But it neither shook our resolve nor undermined our belief in the justness of our cause and the inevitability of our victory. As an Eritrean proverb says: "The rod of truth may become thinner but it cannot be broken." Indeed, justice has finally prevailed. This is a source of hope and happiness not only for the Eritrean people, but for all those who cherish justice and peace.

While we rejoice at the peace and freedom that have been attained and the promising prospects that lie ahead, we are confronted with the reality of a devastated country and population. The extent of the physical and economic destruction visited on our country, in terms of infrastructure, industry, agriculture, education and health services, as well as the more painful human losses - the death of over 150,000 people, the exile of a quarter of the population, massive displacement, and over 100,000 disabled and orphaned - are appalling by any standard, especially when measured against the meagre resources and small size of our population.

Formidable as our problems are, we are confident that we can and will rebuild our devastated country and provide a decent life for ourselves. It is our firm conviction that outside assistance, no matter how generous, cannot of itself solve our problems. Ultimately, deliverance will depend on our own efforts, on the mobilization and efficient utilization of our resources. But as we start to clear the rubble and pick up the pieces after three decades of war and destruction, we find that our resources are too limited for the awesome task of rehabilitation and jump-starting our economy. We cannot help but ask: Will the United Nations and the international community come to our assistance this time or will our pleas once again go unheeded?

At this critical juncture of its history, Eritrea needs and deserves international support and assistance, not only because the United Nations and the international community bear special responsibility for Eritrea, but also because it is a test case for the United Nations "Agenda for Peace" and the whole concept of peace-building. Eritrea has not only secured peace and stability; it has made the rare achievement of establishing warm relations of cooperation with its former enemy, Ethiopia. And it is tackling the task of reconstruction with popular support and participation, with commitment and determination, with sound and flexible policies, with prudent and efficient utilization of limited resources, and with a demonstrated readiness to promote regional understanding and cooperation.

Unfortunately, the response of the United Nations and the international community so far has not been encouraging. Though the active involvement of the United Nations in the referendum was generally commendable, United Nations contributions to the Eritrean referendum - one of the most successful electoral processes in which the United Nations has ever been involved - was less than $2 million, a meagre sum compared to the tens of millions of dollars devoted to similar exercises, many of which were dismal failures. Similarly, the response of the international community to the programme for the repatriation of half a million Eritrean refugees from the Sudan fell far short of reasonable expectations, and the Government has found no alternative but to start the programme regardless of funds and expected problems. Eritrea has also embarked on a crucial demobilization programme - it has demobilized close to one third of its 90,000-man army in the first phase - without United Nations or other contribution. It had to cut back some of its rehabilitation and development projects and borrow money to finance this first phase.

In our efforts at mobilizing international resources, we have repeatedly been met with such excuses as "a lack of funds", "competing demands", "more pressing priorities" and "donor fatigue". There well may be some truth in all of this. And we are appreciative of the constraints and commendable efforts of some donors. But, I believe, we cannot and should not hesitate to acknowledge that, by and large, the international aid programme is deeply flawed, unfair, unjust and ill-structured to respond to the vital needs of recipient communities. Assistance and the amounts of assistance appear to be decided, not on the basis of need or the capacity to put the assistance to good use, but - even after the proclamation of the end of the cold war - on the basis of the interests and agendas of donors. Moreover, the international community tends to be more responsive to putting out fires than to preventing them, and once the fires are put out it often turns its back on the smouldering combustible remains.

One of the most disquieting features of the present international situation is the marginalization of the entire continent of Africa. Every indicator shows that Africa is sliding back and being left behind, which results in intolerable poverty, suffering and desperation for millions of its people. There is no denying that the onus of the responsibility for these problems falls first and foremost on us Africans. But, I believe, the international community must squarely face the fact that it also bears responsibility for Africa's plight. Many of the dictators who have sown so much havoc and suffering were in fact brought to power and sustained during the years of the cold war by sections of the international community. Perhaps more significant is the fact that the now discredited economic policies and failed projects were generally designed and approved by international donors and implemented under the direction of an army of foreign experts and advisers.

In our present highly interlinked world, Africa's marginalization, the poverty and desperation of its people, of its youth, cannot be walled in within the continent's boundaries. They are bound to threaten global prosperity and stability. The frustration and resentment that continue to swell and may well explode must be defused in time. Once again Africa must seize its own destiny. Its people and leaders must tap deep into their human and material resources and come up with the wisdom, strategy and commitment to lift Africa from the mire. But as they set out on this difficult road the international community needs to come to their assistance, not with hand-outs that only increase dependency, not with the familiar packages and projects that have gone down the drain, not with preconceived formulas and attitudes of "We know what is best", but in a spirit of partnership dedicated to helping Africa to stand on its own feet and contribute to the enrichment of human life and the protection of the environment.

Of course, not everything in Africa has been bleak. Just as gross human failure is not limited to Africa - witness events in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Soviet Union and elsewhere - Africa has its share of positive and uplifting developments and successes. We are following with much interest the determined and promising efforts of several African countries, both at the individual country level and within a regional context. Despite the neglect and inequities of the international community, many African peoples are making a determined assault on poverty and social injustice. In our part of the continent, Eritrea and Ethiopia have already started mutually beneficial economic cooperation, and, together with the other countries of the Horn, are working to set up a regional mechanism to foster peace and cooperation. We strongly believe all of the many positive developments in Africa should be duly recognized.

In view of the positive developments in the Horn of Africa, the tragedy that has gripped Somalia has been profoundly disturbing. As the bloodletting among our Somali brothers assumed harrowing proportions, and at a time when many were hesitating, we strongly advocated the constructive intervention of the international community, under the umbrella of the United Nations, to save lives and help extricate Somalia from the destruction it was heading for. Despite our opposition in principle to external military intervention, we realized early on that the extraordinary situation in Somalia demanded extraordinary measures.

It was therefore with great relief that we welcomed the decision of the United States Administration to intervene in Somalia. Encouraged, we sought - individually and in conjunction with our regional partners - to ensure that the intervention would be guided by clear and comprehensive security, and humanitarian and political objectives. And we did not hesitate to share our views on the size, type and length of stay of the intervention force needed for the success of the mission. But unfortunately our views were not heeded, although we were, and still are, better placed to understand and work in the realities of neighbouring Somalia.

Be that as it may, we recognize and appreciate the achievements of the international intervention in Somalia. The improvement of the humanitarian situation and the March 1993 Addis Ababa Accords on national reconciliation are major steps forward. At the same time, the worsening security situation in Mogadishu and the increasing toll in human lives, including women and children, have cast a long shadow on the intervention in Somalia. Repeated mistakes in handling the situation have led some people openly to call for an immediate end to the intervention.

It is our conviction that a precipitate withdrawal of United States troops - which we strongly warned against from the beginning - would not only signal a lack of United States commitment to the intervention, but would eventually make the position of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) untenable. This would plunge Somalia into a catastrophe much worse than the anarchy that prompted the intervention in the first place. We therefore urge the United States and the international community at large to stay the course in Somalia and to shoulder their responsibility to the Somali people in the hour of their greatest need. We also urge them to review, frankly and dispassionately, the intervention to date, build on the successes and achievements and, more importantly, admit and correct mistakes.

We sincerely believe that the countries of the region, whose role has so far been deliberately or otherwise neglected, can make a constructive contribution to the international effort. Consulting them informally every once in a while, as has been the case in the past, is clearly not enough. They need to become part of the process in a more meaningful and formalized way, as it concerns and affects them directly and more than anyone outside the region.

The advent of the new State of Eritrea happily coincided with the end of the cold war, that era of super-Power rivalry that caused so much human misery and led to the virtual paralysis of the United Nations. Like the rest of humanity, we place much hope on the new era, on the prospects of an enhanced role for the United Nations, a role that would make it truly representative of "We, the peoples of the world". And yet we have no illusions that a new, just and equitable world order has dawned. We see too many old habits and practices - inside the United Nations and outside it - to entertain any illusions. Although we hope for successes, we see that the failures of United Nations initiatives far outnumber any of its successes. Injustice endures within nations and between nations.

We are awed by the challenges that continue to face humanity and are deeply aware of our minúscule capabilities. Still, Eritrea is determined to make its own small contribution to the betterment of human life in its own corner of the world.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the State of Eritrea for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Isaias Afwerki, President of the State of Eritrea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

ADDRESS BY MR. RAFIC HARIRI, PRIME MINISTER OF LEBANON

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon.

Mr. Rafic Hariri, Prime Minister of Lebanon, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon, His Excellency Mr. Rafic Hariri, and I now invite him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. HARIRI (Lebanon) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: It gives me pleasure to start out by congratulating you on your election as President of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its forty-eighth session. I should also like to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for his able stewardship of the previous session of the Assembly.

Also, I should like to set on record our appreciation for the outstanding efforts of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to attain the goals of the United Nations and to fulfil the growing responsibilities entrusted to the world body in behalf of world peace. We do note that the changes sweeping across the world today impose upon the United Nations additional responsibilities which the President, Government and people of Lebanon view with hope and optimism. Therefore, we are all called upon to provide the United Nations with the necessary means for fulfilling its expanding mandates. By the same token, the United Nations should for its part streamline its operations in order to adapt to the demands of the future.

I take this opportunity to welcome the Member States which have recently been admitted to the membership of the United Nations. This is yet another indication of the universality of this Organization and a confirmation of the growing need for it.

As the current decade brings us closer to the end of another century in the history of mankind, we now have a clearer picture of the issues and concerns that dominate the thinking of the peoples of the world. In dealing with the spectrum of these questions, we need to rely first and foremost on rational thinking. The wealth of experience drawn from the lessons learned from the numerous conflicts that have taken place throughout this century has taught us that the path of peace is, in the final analysis, the optimal course to follow, as all other avenues have proven futile. The era of a divided world based on blocs and polarization, which severely strained international relations and precipitated crises for many decades, is now over. Therefore, the world is now ready to develop a universal vision of mankind based on a universal code of ethics and set of human rights. The United Nations Organization, which has long suffered from rivalries that paralysed it and placed severe constraints on its potential, is increasingly called upon, in an unprecedented fashion, to engage in peace-keeping activities. Despite the fact that its current operations are somewhat different from the conventional functions originally envisioned for the Organization, its operations demonstrate the growing need for this world body to lend confidence and credibility to the multinational effort in dealing with challenges and conflicts in a fair and sound manner.

We believe that understanding between States and peoples hinges upon the preservation of democracy and human rights. Such understanding would in turn contribute significantly to the elimination of regional and global disputes, in keeping with a major principle set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. Here, I would be remiss if I did not recall Lebanon's contribution to the drafting of the Charter as well as of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for Lebanon was a member of the Special Committee entrusted with the drafting of both instruments.

Lebanon's well-known tradition of firm commitment to the principles of democracy, freedom and human rights, and its success in upholding those principles despite the dangers that threatened it for many years, remains faithful to the basic pillars upon which our pluralistic, open and creative society rests. Lebanon, which has withstood the trying years of its plight, is now facing its critical challenges with the vigour of renewed and consolidated national unity. It has incorporated those principles into the fabric of its identity. Thus, the new constitution proclaims that Lebanon is

> "Arab in identity and affiliation, a founder and active member of the League of Arab States, fully committed to its covenants; and a founding and active member of the United Nations Organization, fully committed to its Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The State is an embodiment of all these principles, in all areas and spheres wherever they apply, without exception."

In view of its singular experience, Lebanon deserves your support and a pledge from the world community not only to provide material assistance and help in the reconstruction of what the civil war has destroyed, but to bolster the Lebanese system. The need for the example set by this system is all the more urgent in our world today, given the many ethnic and religious conflicts currently raging in various regions.

Lebanon, with its time-honoured tradition of coexistence, moderation and tolerance emanating from these lofty human values, can indeed be a living example to those even in advanced societies who are searching for a successful formula for social harmony. This is especially true now that Lebanon has put its tragedy behind it and embarked on a course of accord and concord.

The great majority of the Lebanese lived through the years of war and bore the brunt of its devastation without having any real belief in bellicosity or its causes. Throughout the war, some one million students continued to attend their schools and colleges as if to express, through pursuit of education, their rejection of war. The same majority continued to discharge its duties towards society and the State in many parts of the country. Even ordinary civilian crimes did not rise noticeably during the war.

All this confirms that the Lebanese, who settled this problem a long time ago, not only in texts and precedents, but also in their daily routines and life-styles, are proud to be able to present to the world, after their long suffering, a true example fashioned from first-hand experience of the resilience of human nature with its wealth of intellect and vivid diversity.

In our common interest we must all seek to safeguard such a legacy and protect it from violence. This is particularly true in the case of the Middle East region, which has traditionally and historically suffered from the interference of foreign powers and the struggles of interest and conflict that transcended national frontiers, and even the entire region, to pose a threat to world peace in its entirety.

Given the magnitude and intensity of the conflicts that have ravaged Lebanon soil, the survival of our country proves that the Lebanese nation is too strong to be eliminated and that it has long-established traditions that will stand the test of time. The people of Lebanon has demonstrated great stamina and resilience in the face of overwhelming odds.

Lebanon is committed to realizing its aspirations and determined to achieve progress within the context of the opportunities offered by the modern world. If the armed conflicts and hostilities of recent decades have drained many of our resources, our potential and our capabilities must henceforth be channelled to face up to and overcome the common challenges that confront mankind everywhere.

To this end, the Lebanese Government is striving to restore Lebanon to its special position in the community of civilized nations. The emphasis is on achievements that will make the Lebanese individual capable of facing the future. Lebanon considers that its major loss, perhaps, has been the migration of many of its most talented and highly skilled young people. One of our major concerns now is to create favourable conditions that will attract them back. It is our hope that our human resources will be highly instrumental in expediting the reconstruction of the better society we all aspire to see: a society that enjoys peace, democracy and prosperity.

Lebanon, whose people suffered enormous hardship during the dark years of war, fully recognizes and appreciates the various tragedies and pains that afflict some parts of the world today. As we reaffirm our permanent commitment to peace and to the Charter of the United Nations, and to the tenets that emanate from them, we stress our adherence to and respect for an integrated system of values which includes human rights, freedom and dignity. Indeed, this should be the ultimate goal of every undertaking and endeavour.

Early on, the United Nations took cognizance of the situation in Lebanon, as attested to by the many resolutions adopted by the Security Council on the Lebanese crisis. Some people may not be aware that between 1968 and 1993 more than 80 United Nations resolutions and statements on Lebanon were adopted. This is a large number of resolutions in comparison with other crises. Lebanon has an imposing file indeed with both the General Assembly and the Security Council. If the sheer volume of United Nations official records on Lebanon is compared with that of the documents submitted to ordinary courts of law, it will become clear instantly that, on the scales of international justice, the weight of evidence tips the scales in favour of Lebanon. Justice and law have been, and continue to be, on the side of Lebanon. Notwithstanding, the Lebanese have always been deeply disappointed by the fact that political interests have continued to outweigh justice and the rule of law, and led to the application of double standards regardless of the scores of resolutions that have been adopted right here in the United Nations in support of the legitimate demands of Lebanon, a country that sought effective recourse from the United Nations.

All those United Nations resolutions have called for ending violence in Lebanon and for respecting its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and thus have reaffirmed the country's political independence and national sovereignty. Therefore, we must give credit to the Organization for its initial favourable response in regard to Lebanon, especially in terms of the need to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and the establishment of the United Nations peace-keeping force in southern Lebanon. I avail myself of this opportunity to recognize the effective role played by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). May I pay tribute to the many United Nations personnel who have made sacrifices, including the loss of life, in the line of duty in southern Lebanon. To those contingents and to the friendly countries that have contributed troops, we express our deep gratitude.

However, as we look forward to the future - having taken firm and crucial steps towards restoring normalcy, with the substantial and effective help of Syria in disarming the militias, ending the internecine fighting and restoring the authority of the State, we feel we have the right to call upon the United Nations at a time when its role is being redefined in consonance with current global changes, to act decisively in Lebanon. More specifically, we expect the United Nations to work forcefully for the implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978), and to ensure Israel's total withdrawal to the internationally recognized boundaries. It is not an overstatement to point out that peace in Lebanon has been, and continues to be, the *sine qua non* for stability in the Middle East and for the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the entire region. Any peace arrangements will remain fragile and incomplete should the international community choose to tolerate the continuation of a situation that threatens Lebanon with potentially explosive disputes.

The Lebanese have agreed by consensus on a new formula for national reconciliation, which was worked out in 1989 at Taif in Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia played the principal role in working out that formula, which later became Lebanon's constitution. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia, in keeping with a long-standing tradition, together with other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council continues to donate substantial assistance towards the reconstruction of Lebanon. With the same goal in mind, the Lebanese Government undertook the implementation of a rehabilitation programme in all spheres of life and in an unmistakable atmosphere of international confidence. Gradually, Lebanon began to restore its traditional, regional and international role. This permitted Lebanese energies to be unleashed, and gave rise to creative initiatives for reconstructing and developing the country.

In all this, Lebanon has faced up to occupation and violence, by adopting a stance anchored in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our country, which draws its strength from the steadfastness and resilience of its people, has reaffirmed time and again its right to live in dignity and to ensure the freedom of its territory. The Lebanese Government is heavily engaged in the reconstruction effort and the enhancement of civilian life in order to promote stability throughout the region.

Israeli acts of aggression, which have clear objectives and purposes, have been met by the Lebanese with a high sense of responsibility, solidarity and internal unity. Our unchanging, spontaneous response is insistence on peace and on securing the security and progress of our country, which has paid dearly for having been used as an arena to settle accounts among conflicting parties.

An insistence on peace was the driving force that prompted the Lebanese to return immediately to their villages and farms following the most recent Israeli aggression. They pitched tents in front of their demolished homes, thus demonstrating their deep attachment to the land and their loyalty to the territory and its bounties.

The true nature of the Al-Khiyam detention camp, where Israeli military authorities hold more than 200 Lebanese citizens without any legal grounds, is well known to United Nations officials and to Member States. Indeed, the case of those detainees is common knowledge in the international media. Moreover, 100 other Lebanese prisoners are being held in various prisons inside Israel. Despite the repeated appeals by the Commission on Human Rights and Amnesty International and the demands made by the Lebanese Government and human-rights societies in Lebanon and the rest of the Arab world, the Israeli authorities refuse to release them. Furthermore, for more than eight years, Israel has denied the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as family members access to visit those prisoners.

It is high time indeed for Israel to respond to the appeals of international bodies by releasing those hostages promptly, thus putting an end to their drawn out suffering and the agony of their families. In fact, Israel is duty-bound to do so in compliance with the relevant international treaties and conventions.

The positive developments now taking place daily in Lebanon are the most articulate expression of the Lebanese refusal to permit their country once again to be a victim of the Middle East conflict at a time when the winds of peace are starting to blow towards the region. Lebanon yearns for peace and has consistently opted for peace throughout its history. In fact, Lebanon can thrive only in an atmosphere of peace and stability. Indeed, its role in its own region and in the world at large cannot be performed in the midst of violence and war. Lebanon believes that the Middle East region, if it enjoys a just and comprehensive peace, will be in a position to contribute incalculable services to mankind. All the peoples of the region, including the Lebanese, have enormous potential, backed by a great cultural heritage and diverse capabilities. Energies and resources that have long been squandered on war could then be harnessed in the service of social and economic development as we stand on the threshold of the twenty-first century with all its promise of achievements to come.

Against this backdrop, and in view of the regional and international developments that have made it possible to initiate negotiations with Israel, Lebanon participated in those negotiations two years ago despite the fact that parts of its territory have been under occupation as a result of an act of aggression committed by Israel in 1978 - and not because of a state of war with Israel. Lebanon's just case firmly rests on a series of United Nations resolutions adopted over the past 15 years, all of which demand Israel's withdrawal and define the necessary means and modalities required to achieve it.

If Israel uses the security of its northern border as a pretext, we would argue that all the measures taken by Israel, including the occupation of territory, have contributed to the disruption of security. In fact, Lebanon and the international community are more than ever convinced that the only way to ensure regional security is to end the occupation of Lebanese territory and desisting from tampering with the security and safety of its population.

Forty-five years of unabated disputes, conflicts and wars have created certain outlooks. Changing such outlooks will require great political courage and deep understanding on the part of those who are interested in peace. Large-scale direct support will also be needed, along with innovative thinking to shake ourselves loose from traditional frames of mind.

More than ever before, the Middle East sorely needs brave, innovative approaches if it is to attain a firm and lasting peace. Lebanon, which is participating in the peace talks in order to liberate its lands and lay the foundations of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, wishes to point out the following:

First, Lebanon demands the total withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Lebanese territories under Security Council resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). The Lebanese armed forces will assume full responsibility for security in the southern and western regions should Israel implement the provisions of those two resolutions.

Secondly, Lebanon, which believes in and seeks peace, would be among the first beneficiaries of a just peace as it expands to encompass the entire region. Along with its Arab brethren, Lebanon will be an active participant in making peace and in supporting its development and advocating its consolidation as the underpinning of life in the Middle East.

Thirdly, Lebanon which has had very painful experiences as a result of the policy of the singling out of certain countries and imposing partial solutions, believes that peace is indivisible, especially in cases where issues are closely interrelated, as is the case in the Middle East. We also believe that unilateral and partial arrangements are bound to give rise to nothing but new disputes and conflicts.

In this context, I should like to affirm, on the basis of the object-lessons learnt from our common experience, that there can be no firm and lasting peace in the Middle East without Lebanon and Syria. The accord reached between Israel and the Palestinians will remain a mere single step unless it is quickly complemented by substantive solutions on the other Arab tracks. Lebanon, which is extremely limited in the size of its territory, has a delicate population composition and scant economic resources, cannot provide a solution for Palestinians who have been uprooted from their land. The responsibility for returning the Palestinians to their homeland and for finding a satisfactory solution to their status remains within the competence of the international community. If we really wish to put an end once for all to the chapters of pain and anguish in the Middle East, then the cause of the Palestinians should be addressed in such a manner that may ensure for them a decent life commensurate with their legitimate aspirations and the aspirations of all our countries after human rights.

Fourthly, in order to achieve peace, Lebanon is willing to cooperate fully with the two co-sponsors of the peace conference, particularly the United States of America, to reach a comprehensive and just solution that would safeguard the right of all parties to permanent peace, and put an end once and for all to conflicts in the region. Towards that end, Lebanon stands ready to assume its due share of the responsibility.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Rafic Hariri, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lebanon, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. ANDREATTA (Italy): I would like to express our warmest congratulations to Guyana and to you personally, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

I am also pleased that in the past year the United Nations family has grown to include the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Andorra, Monaco and Eritrea. We wish to extend a special welcome to the last two in view of our long-standing historic and human ties.

Italy, deeply committed to European political and economic unity, shares the views expressed by the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is the current Chairman of the European Council.

We are not simply voicing conventional wisdom if we stress the depth of the transformations that define the times in which we live. Every day brings forth new proof that the end of the cold war has brought us to a watershed. We must carefully decipher the lessons and courageously shoulder the new tasks with which this moment has presented us.

As the Secretary-General said in Milan, international law is the main instrument at our disposal; it is not merely a regulatory instrument but the very language of the relations between States. But the social pressures we are now facing are profoundly new, generating changes that international law must begin to reflect as it translates new needs into new institutions.

If today we believe we can govern this transformation, and if we refuse to yield to the disorderly growth of a new international order, we have first and foremost the renewed vitality and prominence of the United Nations to thank.

The United Nations has evolved on the foundation of practices that are solidly inscribed in the Charter, while discovering new ways to pursue its aims. Take peace-keeping, a practice from the United Nations earliest days that has recently acquired a special role. Today peace is more likely to be threatened by the explosion of internal conflicts (though at times with transnational components) than by acts of open aggression across international borders. Peace-keeping, peace-enforcement, and humanitarian relief missions all take place in the midst of conflicts with complex political causes, and tangled ethnic and national roots. In such an environment, the traditional juxtaposition of diplomacy and military action no longer corresponds to the reality of the present, and a broad initial mandate is not sufficient concretely to define operations in the field.

The unity of military command is an unquestionable principle, without which no operation can succeed. However, the political management of an operation cannot be confined strictly to military options, especially when the real issue is not the legitimacy of the use of force (which may be clearly authorized by the Security Council's mandate), but its advisability and timing in view of the political objectives. I would add that in situations involving crowds of civilians, we must consider making it our policy always to give pride of place to the use of non-lethal anti-riot equipment. This is not only an Italian concern. Spokesmen for other countries have also stressed that countries contributing troops to United Nations peace-keeping missions need mechanisms that would exempt their troops from passively abiding by orders that may be illegal, inconsistent, or in contradiction with the aims of the operation.

The United Nations peace-keeping practices reveal an awareness of the need for adequate prior consultation of troop-contributing countries. To this end, while Article 29 of the Charter provides a general guideline for the establishment of bodies subsidiary to the Security Council, Article 44 could provide a more fitting solution to the problem. It provides for the Security Council to establish consultative procedures with non-members of the Security Council that have been requested to contribute troops to peace-keeping and security operations. Today, even in the absence of formal agreements such as those provided for by Article 43, I believe we should extend Article 44, by analogy, to operations conducted under Chapter VII of the Charter.

In his "An Agenda for Peace", the Secretary-General defined peace-building as laying the necessary political and socio-economic foundations for a lasting peace after the phase of open conflict has ended. The reconstruction - or the establishment - of legal and economic institutions in critical areas and countries represents the main prerequisite of an enduring peace.

These premises form the basis of what Italy means to propose in order to move beyond the current situation in Somalia - a situation characterized somewhat by giving pride of place to the military aspect of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) and by the standstill in the political process. We believe that it is essential that the United Nations step up its political efforts at peacemaking by appointing a personality of great international prestige to renew the political and diplomatic initiative with all the Somali factions. At the same time, the mechanisms of the Addis Ababa Conference should be reactivated in such a way as to increase the involvement of the African nations and their institutions in the normalization of Somalia. But the predominantly political nature of our operation to restore hope in Somalia must also be translated into the progressive reconstruction of Somalia's basic economic and social structures and the reorganization of a government and its administrative structures. This requires broad development programmes, to which Italy's commitment has remained unswerving even in the most difficult moments.

Mrs. Fritsche (Liechtenstein), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Italy welcomes the renewed central role of the United Nations, and at the same time supports a reform of its institutional mechanisms.

Let us first consider the possibility of a change in the membership of the Security Council. As Italy emphasized to the Secretary-General last June, since the Security Council is moving towards a future of greater burdens and responsibilities, its representativeness and effectiveness must develop in parallel. What we suggest is that, in addition to the permanent members with veto power and the non-permanent members, a third category be established. It would be made up of countries able to make a special contribution to achieving the objectives of the United Nations. What matters is not drawing up controversial lists, but identifying objective criteria for selection, based on economic factors, human resources, culture, and mass communications. These countries would rotate two at a time, thereby becoming semi-permanent members of the Council.

We must all recognize the renewed central role of the United Nations in international relations, but avoid interpreting this role in exclusive terms.

The regional dimension of multilateralism, which is described in Chapter VIII of the Charter, has today a great role. Take the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), which has been explicitly defined as a regional institution on the basis of the United Nations Charter. Italy is about to assume the chairmanship of the CSCE. We believe that it is being called on to play an increasing role, mainly in preventive diplomacy but also in peace-keeping and in fostering negotiated settlements. In this regional framework, we would welcome more stringent regulations on arms transfers that build on the present United Nations provisions.

If it is true that without peace there can be neither development nor satisfaction of social needs, it is also true that conflict is fed everywhere not only by the urge to subjugate the adversary violently but also by the existence of social injustice, imbalance and poverty.

The first and basic injustice is the violation of human rights. When the international community defends human rights, it is pursuing absolute and autonomous values that must be protected. At the same time, it is eradicating many of the causes of violence between groups and nations.

We hope that an agreement between the groups will finally make it possible to end the fighting in Bosnia. However, as the international community prepares to support the implementation of an agreement, we must not forget the war crimes and the crimes against humanity committed during this tragic conflict. Thus, we applaud the establishment of the International Tribunal and hope that - impartial and free from political influences - it will begin its work at the earliest possible date. Where appropriate, the Tribunal should hand down tough sentences, although I take exception to the death sentence, which Italy firmly opposes on the basis of its time-honoured juridical traditions.

I wonder if the international community could not summon the same determination to establish an international criminal court to prosecute the most serious human rights violations.

Italy is convinced that human rights prosper in systems based on democracy and an open-market economy. That is why we firmly support Governments that are committed to such goals and work courageously through hardships and temporary crises.

An issue of great contemporary relevance is the protection of minorities - which cannot be separated from the protection of individuals, for the two issues are based on the same hopes, the same principles of freedom and the same respect for cultural, religious and philosophical differences. Too often, the territorial integrity of the State has been contrasted with the rights of minorities. Instead, we must demonstrate that in a democracy, a democracy that leaves room for direct participation and for true pluralism of identity and choice, it is possible to balance these two equally worthy values. We must demonstrate that there is no contradiction between the protection of minorities and the stability of borders. On the contrary, as the experience of my country shows, they can reinforce each other.

The principles, institutions and rights that make peace more solid are a primary consideration. But we must never underestimate the often-decisive role played by weapons. The accumulation and development of weapons endangers stability since the perception of a threat triggers actions that are harmful for peace and economically ruinous.

That is why disarmament and non-proliferation, even in the post-cold-war era, must remain one of our main objectives and why we highly value the message delivered from this podium by the President of the United States.

We need to complete past disarmament initiatives that we have agreed to and begun, and both confirm and expand existing tools. We strongly support the early ratification of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START II). The Non-Proliferation Treaty must be strictly observed, which is why North Korea's unclear attitude towards that Treaty is a matter of such great concern. That Treaty must also be strengthened and made universal. In 1995, we should all join together to renew the Treaty unconditionally and for an indefinite period.

Today we are witnessing the emergence of a collective consciousness, the expansion of a shared system of values, an international citizenship based on common, objective interests and the spread of more uniform lifestyles. An Italian philosopher, Giambattista Vico, wrote:

> "Ultimately, once the cities got to know each other, having shared dealings in war, alliances and trade, they came, to an unprecedented extent, to the recognition of natural civic rights as a natural right of all peoples, that is of all united nations - as if the world were one large city - which is the law of humankind."

That was written in the early eighteenth century.

Faced with a world beset by multiple conflicts, in which individual nations or groups often pursue their interests through the use of force, it would be intellectually dishonest and morally reprehensible to adopt attitudes of resignation or fatalism. Violence is no more natural than peaceful coexistence and collaboration between peoples and groups. Acting against violence and for coexistence is therefore not only morally desirable, but actually practicable.

One such possibility has been eloquently demonstrated in recent days by the hopeful development of a peaceful future in the Middle East thanks to the courage of the Israelis, the Palestinians and the Arab countries. As a Mediterranean country with a long tradition of active involvement in the cause of stability and peace in the area, Italy is ready to contribute further to help the entire region take the first steps on a long and complex journey toward peace and cooperation, with borders permanently defined in accordance with Security Council resolutions. The same possibility is confirmed by the promising steps being taken towards democracy and coexistence in South Africa.

The awareness of the possibility and the moral duty to act must also inspire our attitude towards the economic and social problems that dehumanize the lives of millions of people all over the world. I am referring to development policies, which should be conducted in a spirit of solidarity and on the basis of multilateral coordination. Such coordination must also be extended to bilateral initiatives, while we also need closer cooperation between agencies. That approach has already produced successful results in Mozambique and Eritrea, and even in war-torn Somalia. It must now be applied to endorse the peace process in the Middle East. The donors' conference about to open in Washington will provide an important occasion to translate our political support into action.

We know the limits of our actions, and we cannot allow ourselves to be swayed by the temptations of noble but abstract Utopias. It is our responsibility to draw up principles and instruments that are valid for the times in which we live and that can help us to manage and to transform in a more rational and humane way the reality that surrounds us.

Each country must promote this action on its own or through alliances or other groups. But it is ultimately here, in the framework of this Organization and in view of its universal aims and membership, that each country will have to contribute to the solution of these problems. To do this, we must not limit ourselves to declaring principles but, rather, on the basis of those principles we must be willing to hand the United Nations the tools it needs. The international community - in other words, we as Member States - is giving the United Nations greater and greater responsibilities. But the responsibilities of the United Nations are our responsibilities. The problems of the United Nations are our problems.

Mr. JESZENSZKY (Hungary): Allow me to express my warmest congratulations to Ambassador Insanally, on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I should also like to welcome into our midst Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Monaco and Slovakia, whose recent admissions have brought the United Nations even closer to becoming truly universal.

During the last year, the international community continued to face extremely grave challenges. This period has seen, along with certain positive achievements, more alarming failures and disappointments. The questions to which we have to respond take us back once again to the basic problem of multilateralism, that is to say, to defining in our complex world the values that can ensure a cohesion which is necessary for our common will to be translated into joint action.

The fall of communist dictatorships in Central and Eastern Europe and the end of super-Power confrontation have brought about an international political climate in which new approaches can be found in the maintenance of international peace and security and the resolution of global problems. They are based on greater opportunities for closer interaction and the participation of each and every United Nations Member State in managing and influencing the course of events. These opportunities and the ability of the international community to turn them into tangible results are manifest in the conflict-resolution processes in Central America and South-East Asia, in the resolute reversal of brutal aggression in the Gulf, in the fundamental transformation we are witnessing in South Africa and in the historic agreement in the Middle East. These evolutions clearly demonstrate that with political courage, far-sightedness and readiness for compromise, even the most intractable problems can be untangled and resolved. They show us an example that ought to be emulated in all regions of the world.

The convulsions of the new era of world history are strongly felt in a country like Hungary which, as it has so often in its history, finds itself again close to conflict-ridden areas. Despite the difficulties that inevitably accompany the historic transition processes of the region, the Hungarian Government, ever since it took office in 1990, has been striving consistently and successfully to maintain the country's internal stability and to ensure that it remains a mainstay of stability in our troubled region. Stability should be omnipresent and universal, and we have to find the appropriate ways and means to achieve it.

As regards the old continent, Hungary wants to see democracy, prosperity, security and the institutions, such as the Council of Europe, the European Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that lie at its foundation, gradually expand eastward.

For some time now the world has been living in the shadow of events that ominously remind us of the darkest periods in the history of mankind. The conflict in the former Yugoslavia has been raging for more than two years. But most regrettably, not even the worst cases of disregard for the norms of international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter, not even the gravest crimes against humanity and the most brutal mass violations of fundamental human and minority rights, have proven to be sufficient to persuade the world, when there was still time, to counter aggression promptly and effectively, to prevent the acquisition of territory by use of force and to take a firm stand against the abhorrent policy of "ethnic cleansing".

The end result of such policies of passivity, appeasement and complacency, of the striking lack of an ability to learn from past experiences and of the absence of the necessary political will to act, is well documented right here, in this building, in a shocking and soul-stirring photo exhibition about the horrors of war in the former Yugoslavia. It brings home a painful awareness of the practical consequences of unbridled extreme nationalism and the compelling message not to relax and relent in our national, regional and international efforts to uphold in an uncompromising manner the purposes and principles of the Charter.

The renewal of Central and Eastern Europe and the economic and social processes there have thrown to the surface tendencies of political and ethnic fundamentalism which, having been elevated to the level of official State policy, have unleashed or could lead to conflicts threatening the security of the whole of Europe. In our interdependent world, every nation on Earth, irrespective of where it is situated, should realize the danger of this venomous contagion if it were allowed to spread across our planet.

The people and the Government of Hungary continue to follow the developments of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia with utmost concern. As a country immediately adjacent to the crisis area, Hungary has sought to avoid being dragged into this conflict, while continuing at the same time to voice its principled position on the crisis and abiding by the relevant decisions of the international community.

One has to reckon with the fact that this crisis is not limited to the war-torn areas of Bosnia and Croatia. It festers in Serbia proper, where there is growing pressure on the different ethnic communities inhabiting the country, including the Hungarian community in Vojvodina. In this formerly autonomous province, the successive waves of intimidation and discrimination have already significantly reduced both the size and the proportion of the Hungarian minority. There continues to be a constant threat of a further massive influx of refugees into Hungary, I am afraid. In the conditions prevailing in Serbia and Montenegro, just as in other parts of the former Yugoslavia, it is of utmost importance to seek adequate international protection for these ethnic communities and national minorities. Indeed, one of the key issues in settling the crisis is to ensure their rights without any discrimination, whether they have majority or minority status, with the same norms and standards applying to each and every one of them.

Because of its geographical situation, Hungary finds itself confronted with special economic problems arising from the implementation of sanctions imposed by the Security Council against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). Our economic and financial losses directly attributable to the effects of implementing the sanctions are constantly growing, and have now reached $1 billion. We highly appreciate the steps taken so far by the Security Council *vis-à-vis* those countries that have suffered economic losses and have made use of their right to consult the Security Council under Article 50 of the Charter. We trust that the international organizations and institutions concerned will find early solutions to help alleviate those pressing problems. It is clear from the experience gained in connection with the various sanctions regimes in place that attention from the international community commensurate with the scale of the problems caused to third countries is required in order to examine how best we can establish an effective mechanism for the implementation of Article 50. Without such a mechanism, the burden placed on an ever-growing number of countries fulfilling their international obligations will remain disproportionately and unjustly heavy.

In this connection, it is totally unacceptable to take retaliatory measures in response to actions by any State in fulfilment of its obligations under the Charter. Therefore, illegal measures such as attempts to block free and safe navigation on the Danube river, which is an international waterway vital for many countries of Europe, warrant international action, and the States concerned rightly expect the international organizations to provide effective assistance in this matter.

In the light of recent bitter experiences, we have become more acutely aware that the world cannot be made a safer place unless there are international organizations able and willing to take resolute and timely action. Multilateral diplomacy must be at its best if it is to offer remedies where other possibilities for preventing or settling conflicts have been exhausted. We consider it especially important that the various tools of preventive diplomacy and crisis management should be constantly at the disposal of the international community.

Hungary is highly interested in the ongoing work aimed at a comprehensive review and enhancement of the United Nations peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building activities. Many substantive proposals have been made and useful observations put forward in this regard. We hope that they will assist in our endeavours to carry out genuine and purpose-oriented reform measures in the world Organization. We expect that the present session of the General Assembly will move us ahead in the debate on how to bring certain provisions of the Charter into line with the changing realities of our world. Conditions seem ripe today for giving most serious consideration to questions relating to the review of the Charter. The fundamental aim of such a review is to make the United Nations function better. At the same time, it should in no way undermine the effectiveness of the decision-making processes at the United Nations. In this context, Hungary fully understands the pressing financial situation of the world Organization and, as its contribution to redressing this state of affairs, has, as of this year, eliminated all its arrears to the regular budget.

In our view, there are, *inter alia*, two particular areas where a review of the provisions of the Charter is needed. First, there is a long-overdue need for a review of those Charter provisions that imply a distinction between United Nations Member States on the basis of their status of signatory or enemy State. On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the United Nations, the elimination of this obsolete distinction would be more than a gesture towards a number of countries that have, over the years, fully proved their commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. Secondly, the role played in today's world politics by some States and their contribution to the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter justify their more intimate involvement in the maintenance of international peace and security. We are aware that the issue of the enlargement of the permanent membership of the Security Council will be the subject of further discussions. However, we believe that two countries - Germany and Japan - already qualify to play the enhanced role that would stem from permanent membership in the Security Council.

My Government continues to believe that the United Nations provides a most fitting framework for translating into reality our global responsibility for the international protection of human rights. It is our deep conviction that the Security Council should pay appropriate attention, and act resolutely and promptly, as part of its preventive actions, to mass infringements of human and minority rights, since they constitute threats to regional and international peace and security.

We should pursue an effective integration of human rights elements into the workings of the whole United Nations system. Hungary supports the early establishment of a post of high commissioner for human rights. An appropriate mandate from this session of the General Assembly could ensure, through this new institution, an adequate presence for human rights elements, particularly in the various fields of early warning, conflict management, peace-keeping and peace-making, electoral assistance and post-conflict peace-building. The high commissioner could make the human rights activities of the United Nations more transparent to world public opinion. We intend to lend our full support to a mandate for the high commissioner that would also cover the protection and promotion of minority rights. In our view, the high commissioner could also play a major role in raising public awareness of the positive models of multinational coexistence and minority protection systems that are functioning well in various democratic countries of the world. Here I can refer to the previous speaker, whose country, I believe, is a good example of this. We believe that this task is of major importance and has never been higher on the agenda than it is today. The application or adaptation of these successful solutions to the specific circumstances prevailing in other parts of the world could greatly contribute to a more satisfactory human rights situation in our world at the end of this turbulent century.

I have obviously not exhausted all the problems besetting the world. Our Governments today have an enormous responsibility to find answers to the new challenges. If we fail to act now, we risk losing all the achievements won with the ending of the cold war.

Mr. ASAMOAH (Ghana): It is with pleasure that, on behalf of the Ghana delegation, I convey to Mr. Insanally of Guyana our congratulations on his election, by acclamation, as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. He assumes this high office at a momentous time in the history of mankind, as we endeavour to establish a new world order based on freedom and justice. The skills and experience that he brings to his office assure us of success during his tenure. The cordial relations that happily exist between the President's country and mine increase our satisfaction, hopes and expectations. We pledge to him and to the Bureau our full cooperation and support.

Let me place on record also our appreciation of the effective leadership that the President's predecessor, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, gave to our Organization during his stewardship. His ability to navigate the General Assembly through the turbulence of a contradictory context in international relations was admirable.

Once again, the Secretary-General has shown, through a display of his remarkable skills as a thinker, an administrator and an accomplished diplomat, that he is on top of his job. The credit is no doubt shared by the staff, whose dedication and commitment have been maintained.

The universality of the General Assembly, which makes it the most representative organ of the Organization, has again been reaffirmed with the admission of five new Member States since August 1992. We take this opportunity to welcome them and to extend to them the cooperation of the Ghana delegation.

The search for enduring peace is still the greatest challenge of the Organization, in spite of the end of the cold war. The collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the accession to independence of its constituent parts, the freedom and independence of the countries of Eastern Europe, German reunification, and the cold-war relics of trouble spots have brought to the fore

> "Simmering disputes, violent conflicts, aggression and foreign occupation, interference in the internal affairs of States, policies of hegemony and domination, ethnic strife, religious intolerance, new forms of racism and narrowly conceived nationalism", *(A/47/675, annex, para. 3)*

as the Jakarta Message of 1992 of the Non-Aligned Movement so aptly stated.

At the same time, our world is faced with an economic and a social situation similar to that which preceded the two world wars. All these developments, aggravated by global recession, threaten to undermine the purposes of the United Nations.

We must continue to pursue the goal of total disarmament. We should like the proposed United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to include nations' production of arms and all other weapons of mass destruction.

The goal of complete and total disarmament would obviously be easier to pursue in an environment of peace based on mutual confidence. It is in this context that we welcome the efforts of the United Nations to shoulder the increasing burden of peace-keeping and peacemaking. In Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola, South Africa, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, the Middle East, Cyprus, and elsewhere, the efforts of the United Nations have served as a positive check on the threat to international peace and security. There are, however, lessons to be drawn for current and future operations. The holding of elections in Angola and in Cambodia without the fulfilment of certain conditions, such as the disarming and cantonment of troops, was tactically unhelpful, in spite of the circumstances that led to the elections - a mistake which, thankfully, the United Nations does not intend to repeat in Mozambique. We should also remind ourselves that peacemaking may be a slow and painful process. The need to retain the confidence of all parties and their support for, and participation in, the process is fundamental and crucial to the success of such operations.

We are disappointed at the instability that continues to engulf the former Yugoslavia. Whilst we still regret the initial reaction of the international community - in particular, the regional institutions - to developments there, we wish to reiterate that unrestrained nationalism that seeks justification in the much-cherished principle of self-determination is unacceptable. Furthermore, the expression of such nationalism in "ethnic cleansing" is as barbaric and revolting as it is reprehensible and totally at variance with civilized behaviour. The readiness of the United Nations to act decisively in Somalia contrasts sharply with the timidity and hesitation that have marked our presence in the former Yugoslavia and threaten to erode the credibility of the Organization. It is for these reasons that we welcome Security Council resolution 859 (1993), in which the Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, calls for the immediate cease-fire and cessation of hostilities throughout the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina that are essential if a just and equitable political solution to the conflict is to be achieved through peaceful negotiations. We expect the Security Council to monitor the implementation of the resolution.

My Government warmly welcomes the historic agreements on limited autonomy for Palestine and on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. These accords are a tribute to the courage, foresight, determination and outstanding statesmanship of Chairman Yasser Arafat and of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. They usher in the beginning of the end of decades of war, mistrust, violence, destruction and wanton killing and suffering that the Arab-Israeli conflict has brought to the people of the Middle East. They lay a solid foundation for a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. We therefore urge the entire international community to support them.

From the new dawn of relations in the Middle East emerges a powerful, compelling and inspiring truth - that there is no conflict that is not capable of solution. That is why we consider that the "no war, no peace" situation in Cyprus should not be permitted to lure this Organization into complacency. The search for a settlement should be accelerated. To this end, the recent decision to maintain the United Nations presence in Cyprus should encourage all the parties involved.

The situation in Sudan, equally, cries out for a peaceful solution and for greater United Nations involvement as a contribution to the search for an enduring settlement to an essentially political problem that has brought such suffering to the people and has created an unbearable refugee problem for neighbouring States.

Our Organization has recorded laudable success in its implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) on the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The independence of Namibia is the latest of the success stories of decolonization. However, the Territories and peoples that remain under colonial rule demand our active and sustained attention and render premature any conclusion that the decolonization process has been completed.

We welcome the progress that has been made in the negotiations in South Africa. However, the international community needs to remind itself that apartheid is far from being completely eradicated. The process of democratization in that country must be completed so that all its citizens may be enabled to exercise their voting rights. The world community has a responsibility to maintain its vigilance regarding South Africa until the election on 27 April 1994, which will put in place an acceptable constitutional programme for a transitional Government based, for the first time in the history of that country, on universal adult suffrage.

Of equal concern is the impasse over Western Sahara. The United Nations peace plan must be allowed to work, and the timetable set for the holding of elections must be respected by all. In the light of the call for a more prudent use of the resources available to the United Nations, it is imperative that the task of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) be completed rapidly, to the full satisfaction of all concerned, particularly the Sahraoui people.

The new impetus for peacemaking and peace-keeping represents a major advance in our collective engagement in the task of seeking and creating a peaceful and safe world. In this Assembly it has been suggested that the United Nations should limit its commitments, that it should not take on every conflict. But which conflicts must it address, and which ones should it decline to get involved in? That is the crucial question. The unity of the purposes of the Charter and the universality of our Organization compel us to recognize that a threat to peace anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere.

But even if the suggestions have merit, either on the grounds of lack of funds, constraints in logistics or the United Nations inability to heal all the world's wounds, my delegation wants to stress the need for the United Nations to see all the peace-keeping assignments it is engaged in through to their logical conclusion. The United Nations cannot, at this juncture, turn its back on South Africa, Liberia, Rwanda, Angola, Mozambique, Haiti, Somalia or the former Yugoslavia. It would be a sad day indeed if all these laudable initiatives were abandoned on the grounds of well-reasoned arguments pleading lack of funds or of the will to help these nations enjoy the peace that has eluded them for years.

In recognition of the fact that the United Nations cannot undertake too many initiatives, it should devise mechanisms for shoring up regional efforts at conflict resolution, such as in Liberia. We also wish to stress that the internal parties to the various conflicts which the United Nations is striving so hard to resolve have a moral responsibility to play their part in accelerating the process towards peace. Human decency and the sanctity of human life impose this duty on them. In this respect, we must encourage the Inkatha Freedom Party and other right-wing groups to join the process of negotiations in South Africa, and we should condemn in no uncertain terms the treachery of UNITA and the attitude of some of the Somali warlords.

Whatever mistakes the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) may have made, it is grotesque for any Somali leader to seek to be a hero by engaging the United Nations in combat. Such a show of ingratitude may have long-term damaging consequences in terms of the willingness of Member States to undertake humanitarian missions. And what would be the consequences for the Somali people should the United Nations decide to abort UNOSOM? Any leader who has the interest of his people at heart needs to reflect on that.

It is noteworthy that many of the conflicts plaguing us are in the developing countries. We hope the call for limiting the peace-keeping role of the United Nations is not an attempt to shirk the burden of engaging in solving the political problems in these countries in the same way as the fundamental economic concerns of these countries have been marginalized.

As we concern ourselves with the resolution of these sometimes malignant conflicts, let us not forget to address the fundamental factors that generate many of them. We know that a great proportion of these problems can be traced to economic deprivation and underdevelopment. My delegation has stressed time and again in this Assembly and elsewhere that underdevelopment and conflicts have a link. It is often the poorest countries or countries where economic decline has been steep that relapse into savage violence. We have also said that the source of the condition of underdevelopment can be largely traced to a global economic system that has been inimical to the interests of developing and poor countries.

It is time the United Nations, in its effort to construct peace and keep the peace, addressed some of the fundamental economic issues that hamper all efforts to eradicate global poverty. In this connection, the perennial problems that plague the economies of the South must now be fully tackled as part of the energetic search for world peace. We have said in almost all United Nations forums, including the Assembly, that the debt burden cripples our economies. We have spoken regularly about the unacceptable levels of resource flow from the poor nations to the rich. We have drawn regular attention to the unequal terms of trade, protectionist barriers and a disastrous global pricing system that does not pay us adequately for the fruits of our labour, whether we produce coffee, cocoa or copper.

It is time the United Nations placed development and the crucial need for restructuring the world economy on its priority list side-by-side with, if not above, its peace-keeping and peacemaking agenda. The United Nations must defend each nation's right to earn its way by being an equal participant in the global market place. Many of us have undertaken structural adjustments. Yet the returns of the great sacrifices we have made remain low. So many of us cannot provide adequate social services in the form of schools, clinics or clean water for our people. In many instances, bowing to the conditions set for the loans we contract to expand our export base, we have to lay off workers and thus consign thousands or even millions of families to indigence as the small pay check that puts a meal on the table, buys medicine when the child is sick, or provides the uniform for the new school-goer in the family, is no longer forthcoming.

The United Nations has been advised, correctly in our view, to run efficient peace-keeping operations, to refurbish itself administratively and to upgrade its skills in all the spheres of its endeavours. We wish to add that the United Nations must now also place upon its active agenda the question of development and tackle it with the seriousness it deserves. We have striven in this Organization to link the environment, human rights, democracy and humanitarian relief with development. It is time we realized that peace-keeping and peacemaking can be carried out efficiently, and the problems that generate conflicts can be resolved, only if we promote the issue of development with vigour. And this can be done if the United Nations insists on a more just, equitable and transparent world economic system that will confer the means for development on all nations. The task of eradicating global poverty must receive the same attention, concentration and energetic action as are given to peace-keeping and peacemaking.

The democratization process, which is part of the effort to promote and uphold human rights, should not be limited to the national level. The full implementation of the principles of democracy within the family of nations should also be one of our central concerns. It is in this context that we seek the revitalization of the General Assembly, where the sovereign equality of Member States finds full expression. We look forward to the General Assembly's playing its full role in the maintenance of international peace and security as required by the Charter. We also welcome the initiative of the Security Council to make its work, including its decision-making process, more transparent. Such transparency will obviously enhance the legitimacy of its decisions and, equally importantly, reflect the fact that it is the Members of the Organization which, under Article 24, confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and that in discharging its functions the Security Council acts on their behalf.

My delegation sees no need to go over the case, which has already been well established, for the reform of the Security Council. Suffice it to say that, whatever the final form of a restructured Security Council, it is clear that its reform should be based on the principle of the sovereign equality of Member States and the clear recognition that the Security Council acts on behalf of the Members of the Organization and should reflect the universality of our Organization. The Ghana delegation is ready to participate in the search for a more legitimate and effective Security Council.

We welcome the commitment made by President Clinton to ensure the payment of contributions due from the United States in respect of peace-keeping operations. It is to be hoped that in the years to come the United States, which pays a substantial portion of the United Nations budget, regular and peace-keeping, will continue to abide by this commitment and also address the question of outstanding contributions to the regular budget.

It is the hope of Ghana that this session will mark the beginning of the renaissance of the United Nations, ready to collectively commit itself to the pursuit of the objectives of our Organization as reflected in the principles and purposes of the Charter.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

11th PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, 30 September 1993
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. LENNART MERI, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Estonia.

Mr. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Estonia, His Excellency Mr. Lennart Meri, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President MERI: Before commencing my address, I would like to express, on behalf of my nation and myself, my sincere sympathy with the people of India on this day of great tragedy.

Let me convey to you, Mr. President, my congratulations on your election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Your election is a fitting tribute to your personal and professional qualities, and also to your country, the Republic of Guyana. As an Estonian, I have a special empathy with your homeland: much like Estonia, your country was liberated from colonial dependence and became a Member State of the United Nations. Like Estonia, your country remembers that independence is the decisive factor which permits small countries to share with great Powers equal responsibility for creating a better world, towards which all of us, seated here in this Hall, are striving.

To your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, I express my recognition for his proficiency in chairing the forty-seventh session. We also express our deep gratitude to Mr. Ganev for visiting Estonia and her sister States Latvia and Lithuania, and for his efforts to apply the moral authority of the United Nations towards removing the remaining vestiges of colonialism from the Baltic States.

To our neighbour in the General Assembly, the State of Eritrea, I express my sincerest welcome and congratulations on its finally joining the family of nations.

I would, however, like to take this opportunity to extend especially warm thanks to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has given the United Nations and the whole world new hope through his strong moral conviction that we need not passively wait for conflicts to arise, but that conflicts should be prevented from arising; that the United Nations is, in the first place, an architect, whose building must not be allowed to be engulfed in flames; that the Organization is only secondarily a fire-fighter who rushes to extinguish fires still burning from the past. This is so even and perhaps especially when, metaphorically speaking, it happens that only a poor man's cowshed has caught fire - for after all, that was enough to burn down all of Chicago.

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Let me express my appreciation and gratitude for Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali's radiant moral sense of responsibility and for the steadfastness with which he has defended the principle of preventive diplomacy. As a small State, Estonia well understands and desires to support the Secretary-General fully in his defence of the purposes and principles of the United Nations and in the implementation of preventive diplomacy.

Three years ago, in 1990, I visited the New York meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe as a foreign minister whose entry into the conference room was strictly prohibited. I was interviewed by television journalists in front of United Nations Headquarters, as chance had it. I stated then that the next time I would be here it would be for the raising of the Estonian flag. The journalists did not even attempt to hide their polite sympathy nor their desire to bring the interview quickly to an end. Did they even attempt to present such an "unrealistic" interview on their television programme?

One year later, in September 1991, I watched the raising of the Estonian flag on a United Nations flagpole and concluded that my mission had been completed. Today I am here to tell the Assembly, and perhaps also those sympathetic journalists, that my work as the first democratically elected post-war Estonian President has only just begun.

Today my words are infused with self-confidence and hope. Estonia has been and is once again a State; Estonia has re-established its place under the sun. In this sense we share common attributes, experiences and goals with the vast majority of States represented here today. The majority of the States Members of the Assembly are only slightly larger or slightly smaller than Estonia, with its 47,000 square kilometres and 1.5 million inhabitants living on the shores of the Baltic Sea. Estonia was robbed of its independence and forced to be the colonial subject of an imperial Power, as was the case with the majority of the Members here today. Just as they did, so have we restored our independence at the cost of untold suffering. For Estonia, as for most of the Members here, this work is still incomplete. The United Nations General Assembly is the best place for uniting our forces, so that we can work together.

This however requires that the Second World War finally end for Estonia. For the Second World War is still continuing in Estonia in a rather peculiar way, because the foreign armed forces which occupied Estonia in 1940 still remain on our territory, regardless of General Assembly resolution 47/21. Estonia has for two years patiently conducted negotiations on the withdrawal of these forces, but without positive results. Of course, we were aware that behind this rigid position stood the Soviet *nomenklatura* and the Russian so-called parliament, which acted on the basis of the Brezhnevite Soviet so-called constitution and whose goal was to restore the Soviet Union in a modernized form. President Yeltsin was a prisoner of this imperialistically minded parliament.

For this reason, we consider the present moment especially opportune for President Yeltsin to strengthen the world's confidence in democracy by withdrawing the remaining armed forces from Estonia and Latvia and by signing international agreements to this effect. This would guarantee stability and security for the Baltic region, which is an inseparable part of Europe's Nordic region - and that region, in turn, is an inseparable part of Europe.

In my correspondence with President Yeltsin I have emphasized my readiness to meet him in the nearest future. I would be grateful to the General Assembly, to the Security Council and to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali if, with all their collective moral authority, they would help us rapidly to cut this Gordian knot. This is, after all, not only a problem for Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania: with this effort they would also be supporting the democratization of Russia. With the implementation of preventive diplomacy, they would be removing a potential source of conflict and would thereby strengthen the prestige of the United Nations itself. And last, but not least, by implementing international law equally in the interests of great Powers and of small States they would give back to all of us the hope that, even in terms of *realpolitik*, justice is singular and indivisible.

The United Nations could mandate such a mission, to be led by an authoritative European politician, one in whom both Russia and the Baltic States could feel equally confident. The time is ripe for action. The rapid preparation of an international agreement is in the interests of both sides. When two years of negotiations conducted between a great Power and a small State remain unproductive, it is a sign of danger. Preventive diplomacy consists in the ability to recognize danger signals at an early stage and resolve them in a lightning-rod fashion. This is our first problem and our primary task.

At different stages, two different arguments were used in stalling and detouring the negotiations. First, the Russian side claimed it would be unable to find housing for forces withdrawn from the Baltic States. From a legal standpoint, this argument lacks any content whatsoever. The stationing of foreign forces on the territory of a sovereign State against the express will of that State and its people is in contradiction with international law and cannot be an item for negotiation. At the same time, I would like to repeat again that Estonia is ready, together with its Nordic neighbours and other partners, and to the extent that its resources permit, to assist in the solution of this essentially humanitarian problem. We are grateful to our friends, who have promised housing construction aid in excess of $200 million, and we are prepared, with the help of these partners, to mobilize our construction industry towards this end. We have on several occasions publicly repeated and confirmed this readiness to our Russian partner.

The second argument for the maintenance of foreign armed forces and their installation on the territory of the Baltic States is in a curious way linked to human rights. According to this line of thinking, which has been promulgated primarily in the Western media, the continued presence of ex-Soviet armed forces in the Baltic States is required for the defence of the human rights of the Russians residing there. However, the Russian residents of Estonia have never supported this argument, since they have not wished to become pawns in a political game.

In this connection, I should like to take the opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and you, Mr. Secretary- General, for the assistance of the United Nations. The Republic of Estonia had already enunciated, during the time of the League of Nations, and now it does so even more clearly, the basic principle that human rights are not the "internal affair" of any State. For this reason, on the question of human rights in Estonia we turned for expert opinions and advice not only to the United Nations, but also to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the Nordic Council. Thus, I can confirm that not one of the 15 missions invited by Estonia to inspect the situation firsthand has found human rights violations in Estonia. This has also been emphasized by many speakers during this General Assembly session. It was also, I am happy to note, emphasized by President Clinton in our recent meeting.

I am disappointed that the idea of human rights - which, for Estonia, is self-evident and sacrosanct, and for the lack of which Estonians themselves, during five decades of Communist totalitarianism, had to pay with the loss of their pride, their freedom and their blood in Soviet and Nazi concentration camps - has been cynically exploited. The Republic of Estonia was the first State in the world to guarantee Jews and other minorities, as early as 1925, the right to cultural autonomy. Estonia will never stand idly by while anyone tries to manipulate human rights. For this reason, Estonia supports the creation of the post of a United Nations high commissioner for human rights and the expansion of the United Nations budget earmarked for the defence of human rights.

We wish to work to defend the human rights of all indigenous peoples. We defended the rights of some Siberian peoples during the decades of Soviet totalitarianism, although we had to do it alone and quietly. Now we intend to join forces and to do it, with the help of the United Nations, publicly.

I like to speak of the future in optimistic terms on the assumption that we are capable of finding resolutions to our pessimistic present, or to be more precise, that we are capable of applying these resolutions, since they are already outlined in Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali's report "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277). Allow me, Mr. Secretary-General, to thank you wholeheartedly for the clear analysis and sober recommendations on the implementation of such key concepts as preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. The tragedy in Yugoslavia has reconfirmed the fact that fire-fighting is much more difficult than fire-prevention. This lesson, which is written in the Torah, the Bible and the Koran, is, thanks to the Secretary-General, now slowly penetrating the consciousness of international organizations. Preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping can be a real hope for the United Nations on the condition that we learn to recognize danger, where and when it becomes manifest.

However, in a potential zone of conflict, peace-keeping must be strictly neutral. We must remember the proverb that "You should not let a fox mind the henhouse", that peace-keeping in a particular area cannot be turned over to those parties that have an obvious interest in the outcome of a conflict. Estonia supports the principles of democracy, the inviolability of borders and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and in other international agreements. Consequently, we were disturbed - as, I am sure, many representatives were - by the suggestion of one national representative that the troops of one country should be allowed to intervene up to the borders of a State that no longer exists. I do not have in mind the former Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Estonia can only support a position whereby the choice of peace-keeping forces by the Security Council meets the approval of broad international opinion. On this condition, Estonia also feels a moral responsibility to participate in international peace-keeping according to its capabilities, as well as in other related activities.

This brings me to the consolidation of democracy and the free market economy in Estonia after 50 years of an absurd colonial command economy. Estonia has already been successful, but, together with other Members of the Organization, we could be even more successful. Democracy and the free market economy are interconnected, because they presuppose the right and the responsibility to freely choose. The former Soviet Union spent more money on repressing free thought than it ever did on the creation of a nuclear arsenal. The murder of freedom and the birth of aggression are two sides of the same coin. The first enemy of every totalitarian regime is the domestic enemy, and its first object of attack is free thought. Everyone present knows Adam Michnik's wonderful metaphor about how easy it is to make fish soup from an aquarium, but how difficult it is to make an aquarium from fish soup.

The main resource from which we have drawn the energy for the transformation of Estonia's economy has been the idealism of the Estonian people. This is a large resource, but it is not endless. I want to prevent exhaustion from setting in, exhaustion which could be followed by political apathy and thereby by a desire to be free both of rights and obligations. The replacement of a command economy by a market economy is a disintegrative process both at the State and individual level as long as the market has not started working. Once the market is working, it works for economic and political integration. Therefore, Estonia is more interested in trade, not aid, and therefore we work actively to keep and expand our free trade agreements through negotiations with Brussels.

My aim has been to suggest that the international community has gained new members - the countries in transition. Here the question arises whether the United Nations has realized our special possibilities and our special needs. Estonia does not belong in either the first, second or third world. Do we really need a fourth world, or do we need the ability to react more sensitively to a world which is in constant dynamic change?

I offer as an example an issue that is as unpleasant to the Assembly as it is to me: the division by 15 of the financial commitments of the former Soviet Union, including its United Nations assessment. Estonia has stated repeatedly, and I do not hesitate to state here again, that we cannot and we will not accept this, as we were never legally part of the Soviet Union. Times have changed; our world community must realize this.

We also feel a responsibility to assist others as we have been assisted during the past few years. While Estonia is still reeling from the disastrous consequences of a 50-year occupation, we do have well-educated specialists who could be of service to the United Nations in parts of the world where their skills would be welcome. And I should like to offer the experience we have gained in starting up a country and in creating a new, stable currency.

Allow me to close with some very personal comments. The United Nations is approaching its fiftieth anniversary. The post-war world is approaching its fiftieth anniversary. The United Nations is acting on the basis of an unaltered Charter. But, as I mentioned above, the world has been altered totally. This ever-increasing contrast is most strongly felt by some of the most sensitive United Nations Members, the majority, the small States. I believe that small States have the obligation to redefine the international order. The large nations have the larger obligations, the small States the larger possibilities. This is not a contradiction, but a balance. After all, an Inuit kayak can change its course immediately, while a supertanker needs perilously much time and space to do so.

The best place to redefine the world order is the General Assembly of the United Nations. I am deeply grateful to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali who, sensing this need, has entrusted into our hands his vision of a stable world, entitled "An Agenda for Peace". As a representative of one of Europe's smallest countries and oldest nations, I should like to suggest that the prevalent tendency of the past century, and especially the past decades, has been an increase in the numbers of small countries and a reduction in the number of large ones. The issue of increasing the number of permanent members of the Security Council has been introduced into the agenda, and Estonia supports this as a step towards accepting today's new realities. Personally, I should like to put to you, members of the General Assembly, the following question: should the Security Council not also include as a member with veto power a representative of the world's majority, the small nations?

I do not have an answer to this question and neither do you. This is not tragic. The opposite would be tragic.

Seeking for answers is the United Nations future and our common hope. Today we speak of the fatal differences between cultures. Thereby the inevitability of conflicts is suggested.

Conflicts are not fatal only because someone believes in Buddha, another in Jehovah, another in Christ or Allah or the shamans of Siberia. Cultures have to be different to allow man, with his rights and duties, to look like man, to look like hope. The day before coming here I read a book by the famous Finnish philosopher Matti Kuusi on what hope means to man. The Mexican says that you cannot fill your stomach with hope, but it will keep the soul in your mouth; a Kanuri African will say that hope is the pillar; the Filipino says that daring is the fruit of hope and the Maltese says that he who gives up hope dies.

This diversity is the unity of mankind. And to make it easier for you to keep the unity of man and the world, I will add for salt, pepper and enjoyment a proverb from my shores, the shores of the Baltic: do not lose your hopelessness. Hopelessness is the inevitable shadow of hope, and the ever-persevering United Nations is the collective hope of mankind.

I thank you for your hopeful patience.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Estonia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 *(continued)*

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. ZLENKO **(Ukraine)** *(spoke in Ukrainian; English text furnished by the delegation):* In joining my colleagues in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the high and responsible office of President of the General Assembly, I should like to point out that it is a great honour for a politician and diplomat to guide the work of this universal forum representing practically all the States of the world. I hope that your activities in this important position will promote substantive discussions at this session and the adoption of constructive decisions, and that the work of the forty-eighth session will become a memorable page in your biography.

At the same time, I should like to thank Mr. Ganev, President of the previous session of the General Assembly, for his contribution to the Assembly's work.

Soon we shall commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Teheran Conference, whose decisions laid down the foundations of the United Nations. It was 50 years ago that the participants in that Conference, while discussing the issue of creating an international organization, expressed confidence that the accord among them would ensure lasting peace, and declared the lofty responsibility of all the United Nations in safeguarding peace for succeeding generations.

As long ago as 1918, an outstanding Ukrainian politician and writer, Mikhail Hrushevskiy, stated that "Properly creating history is more important than depicting it positively".

We are proud of the fact that Ukraine took an active part in laying down the foundation of the Organization and that today, along with other members of the international community, it is making a worthy contribution to attaining the noble goals of the United Nations. To our mind, the major result of nearly 50 years of the Organization's existence is the fact that world war has been averted. This is to the credit of the United Nations, a universal forum of States, a unique Organization without which it is impossible to imagine present-day international relations.

Today, when the new dominant feature of international relations is the transition from bipolarity to a qualitatively different world order based on comprehensive security and a balance of interests, the world is witnessing the second birth of the United Nations. For Ukraine, it is of special significance that the United Nations renaissance coincides with the building of our independence, our regained statehood and the revival of Ukraine as a sovereign participant in European and world politics.

For Ukraine, which today is trying to find its place in the world balance of power, its United Nations membership is one of the most important international guarantees of its national security and independence. After the disintegration of the USSR and the disappearance of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, our country is compelled to exist next to a zone of decreased stability and of alienation and even tension, irrespective of who is the initiator and what is the subject of discord. Ukraine finds itself in the epicentre of almost all European developments: every crisis emerging on the continent may affect us in one way or another.

These factors led to the initiative by Mr. Leonid Kravchuk, the President of Ukraine, concerning the creation in the Central and East European region of a space of stability and security which would include all countries in the Baltic and Black Sea zone and that would become, in the future, an integral part of the European system of security. At the same time, this Central and East European space of stability and security would be a reliable link for developing a broad-based transatlantic system of security taking in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, that is, the whole region covered by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Implementation of this idea would be a worthy contribution to preventive diplomacy.

The basic prerequisite for the creation of such a space might be the implementation of the principle of security for oneself through security for all, the main goal of which would be the development of a system of international relations in the region that would rule out threats to peace and stability such as those emanating from the present conflicts on the territories of the former Yugoslavia and USSR.

Ukraine is capable of playing a constructive role in the formation of such a system. As a State which is situated in the centre of the European continent and possesses vast human resources and scientific potential and a strong industrial and agricultural complex, Ukraine is ready to contribute more to the formation of a new, prosperous Europe. In accordance with the principles of a new Europe, we aspire to build a democratic State of law that is economically strong, politically active, peaceful and, in the future, non-nuclear along with others, in which individual rights are respected and guaranteed regardless of nationality or other distinctions.

In this context, I should like to dwell on the problem of nuclear weapons on the territory of Ukraine. As is well known, we inherited from the former USSR a huge nuclear arsenal, the third largest in the world in terms of its combat potential. The declaration on the State sovereignty of Ukraine proclaimed the intention of our State to become non-nuclear in the future.

And this is not a mere declaration. Ukraine is doing as much as it can towards its implementation. The dismantling of the strategic missile complexes has started. An agreement has been signed with Russia on the utilization of the strategic missiles' nuclear warheads. We do not exclude the possibility of conducting negotiations on this subject with a third party.

However, the full-scale implementation of the nuclear disarmament programme is linked to the need to solve a number of problems. Where do we get the money to dismantle and eliminate the strategic nuclear weapons located in Ukraine? According to our estimates, approximately $2.8 billion are needed for these purposes. How do we ensure reliable guarantees of national security for our State?

There arises also the problem of returning to Ukraine - or obtaining compensation for - nuclear components, obtained from nuclear warheads, which, after reprocessing, can be used as fuel for nuclear power stations. This also applies to the nuclear materials extracted from the warheads of tactical missiles removed from Ukraine in 1992.

And finally, what should the thousands of servicemen dismissed from the missile forces do? We have no complete answers to these and other questions; so far the promises of help exist only in statements and on paper.

The *Verkhovna Rada*, the Ukrainian Parliament, is deeply involved in these questions and is looking for opportunities to adopt balanced decisions, in the shortest possible time, taking into consideration the interests both of Ukraine and of the international community as a whole.

At the same time, I should like to stress that while considering this issue we should also take into account the external situation. For today, instability and internal struggles in neighbouring countries sometimes spill over their frontiers and threaten Ukraine's national security and territorial integrity. This is most especially so in the case of the well-known decision by the, now former, Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation concerning the status of Sevastopol. There have also been attempts to question the status of Crimea as a whole. In this connection, I should like to state explicitly that the Republic of Crimea is an inseparable part of Ukraine. Crimea, as a part of Ukraine, could play an appropriate role in the region and make a decisive contribution to consolidating the Black Sea region as a zone of peace and stability. In this context, I should like to express profound gratitude to all the countries, especially to the members of the Security Council, that gave their unambiguous assessment of the illegal encroachments upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and manifested their support for our State. Again, we are convinced that the complicated issues of inter-State relations can be solved only through firm and energetic action on the part of the international community.

In our opinion, the objective basis for cooperation between Ukraine and other countries lies in the formation of a stable and secure system of international relations. In the present circumstances, the basis of this system is respect for the principal postulates of international law, according to which the inviolability of the frontiers and territorial integrity of sovereign States is recognized as one of the prerequisites for international peace and security. The former empires have vanished, and like them imperialistic thinking, such as unilateral interpretations by certain States of legal succession issues and their other actions that are incompatible with the norms and ethics of international relations should also disappear.

We hope that an understanding of contemporary realities will facilitate the further normalization and development of Ukraine's relations with other countries on terms of mutual respect, a balanced search for compromises and the renunciation of extreme rhetoric. Genuine conditions for such developments are already in existence, and it is a worthwhile task to use them to foster mutually beneficial economic relations and to ensure wide-ranging contacts between peoples.

Ukraine, as one of the founders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, is actively developing cooperation with the CIS countries. We regard the Commonwealth as an international mechanism for multilateral consultations and talks that is contributing to the process of forming qualitatively new full-scale, bilateral relations between participating States and is promoting solutions to the problems that they face after the disintegration of the USSR. Our relations with the Baltic States are developing in a positive way.

Ukraine unswervingly supports the efforts of the world community to find a formula for settling the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. We consider that a real solution to this problem is possible only through taking into account the interests of all States in the region, and those of ethnic communities, on the basis of the relevant decisions by the United Nations Security Council and of the cornerstone principles of international law.

We take it as given that all countries involved in the attempt to settle this conflict, and the relevant international structures, must approach the issue very carefully, especially when the use of force is implied. It must be borne in mind that the use of force might lead to extremely undesirable consequences, frustrate the negotiating process and result in an escalation in the conflict and its spread to other areas of the former Yugoslavia.

Our position on the settlement of conflicts on the territory of the former Soviet Union is similar. In this connection, we should like to welcome the role played by the United Nations and the CSCE in Transdnestria and the joint efforts of the international community in searching for ways to stop the bloodshed in Nagorny-Karabakh.

Tragic developments have taken place in Georgia. Signed agreements have been violated, the bloodshed persists and people continue to perish. As long ago as 21 September, Leonid Kravchuk, the President of Ukraine, appealed to the President of the Russian Federation, which is a guarantor of the tripartite truce agreement of 27 July 1993, and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to take all possible measures to stop the escalation of the conflict and to activate the mechanism contained in the agreement. Regrettably, the attempts to stop the dangerous developments have been frustrated and the situation is running out of control, threatening the stability of the Caucasus region as a whole. The international community should immediately call on the potential of the United Nations Charter in order to bring the situation back onto a course of settlement through political dialogue.

At the same time, I should like to draw attention to a truth that is as old as the hills but which is regrettably often forgotten: preventing disease is much cheaper and more effective than treating them. A similar idea was expressed yesterday by Mr. Kinkel, my colleague from Germany. An emphasis on active, preventive diplomacy that would forestall conflicts should become the dominant feature of contemporary international relations. The fact that the issue of Sevastopol was addressed at a meeting of the United Nations Security Council, the activities of the CSCE missions in Kosovo, Sanjak and Vojvodina, and the deployment of United Nations military contingents in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are, to our mind, good examples that illustrate this truth.

In fact, reviving the peacemaking activities of the United Nations has become one of the more vivid examples of the transformation in United Nations political thinking, and is embodied in the conclusion that diplomatic language should replace the language of the gun in inter-State communication.

Ukraine is taking an active part in this process. More than a year has elapsed since a Ukrainian battalion was sent to the former Yugoslavia to participate in the United Nations peace-keeping forces. From the point of view of Ukraine, as a new and independent State, the multilateral peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations remain the

Organization's most effective instruments in its performance of its major function, the ensuring of international peace and security. Ukraine is ready to continue active participation in the peace-keeping activities carried out under the auspices of the United Nations or the CSCE.

The prestige and authority that Ukraine has gained as a result of its participation in United Nations peace-keeping operations have not come easily. Lately, human losses among peace-keepers from the United Nations Blue Helmets have increased. The rise in the number of peace-keeping operations and their expansion may result in further losses. That is why it is our belief that it is urgently necessary to work out a document to define the status of United Nations peace-keeping personnel and to make provision for a mechanism to protect them. This would be a logical development of the provisions of resolution 47/72, adopted by the General Assembly at the initiative of Ukraine, with sponsorship by over 50 States, and of the relevant Security Council resolution, resolution 868 (1993) of 29 September 1993.

Ukraine is interested in strengthening peace, security and stability in the nearby Middle East region and welcomes the decisions reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization on mutual recognition and the agreement on Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza strip and Jericho signed on 13 September in Washington. The first, important step has thus been taken on the road to a complete settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Ukraine welcomes the developments in South Africa, which make it possible to lift economic sanctions against that country. We hope that wisdom and a balanced approach by all the participants in the negotiating process in that country, and active work on the part of the Transitional Executive Council, will become a solid basis for the successful holding of elections and the formation of a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa.

Our State is paying great attention to the experience of the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. The extraordinarily fast pace of developments in some of the countries in this region is evidence of the effectiveness of pragmatic approaches to solving complex political, economic and social issues.

The process of a practical development of relations with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries has been initiated. We see this grouping as potentially one of the best trade and economic partners for Ukraine, inasmuch as trade between the ASEAN States - and the region as a whole - and the countries of Eastern and Central Europe flows through Ukrainian ports.

We shall facilitate by all possible means the development, and the maintenance on the proper level, of relations with the States of Europe, North and South America, the Middle East and Africa.

I should like to dwell briefly on the present-day situation in Ukraine. Frankly, we are experiencing difficult times now. In addition to the establishment of our own State and the rebirth of our national culture and spirit, we are undergoing a transformation to a new system with new civic and economic parameters. Our scholars, specialists and statesmen have not yet succeeded in proposing a programme of economic reforms in keeping with Ukraine's real potential, its historical traditions and the mind-set of its people. And now we have to make major adjustments to the procedure and sequence of the reform process.

Our goal is a market, socially-oriented economic system, directed at meeting the needs of our people. It should take into account economic interrelations that were, objectively, formed in the CIS, opportunities for foreign investment in our economy, and a step-by-step integration of the Ukrainian economy into that of the European Community and the world.

Important steps have been taken in this regard. By adopting a law on ownership, the *Verkhovna Rada* has opened the road to privatization as the principal means for the transition to market-based economic relations. Important documents have been approved concerning the denationalization and privatization of enterprises, land and housing. Ukraine has declared its intention to become an associate member of the CIS economic union, and is engaged in active negotiations within the framework of the Commission of the European Communities.

However, the situation in the State remains extremely complicated.

In overcoming the crisis, the international community, including our compatriots abroad - the representatives of the Ukrainian diaspora - could play an important role. Our legislation sets out favourable conditions for foreign investment in the Ukrainian economy, and a number of measures have been adopted concerning participation by our State in the European and world communities and the development of bilateral trade and economic relations.

It is important to find areas that could appeal to our partners and to proceed to develop and implement specific cooperation programmes and projects. An example of this kind of cooperation can be seen in the activities that we have initiated with Commission of the European Communities and in the framework of the Black Sea economic cooperation.

We are also ready to participate actively in carrying out the economic programmes being implemented within the framework of the United Nations.

In this context, we are heartened by the increasing attention being paid by the United Nations and its bodies and by the economically developed countries to the processes of transition to the market economy being undertaken in the Eastern and Central European States. Favourable conditions for broadening cooperation between the United Nations and States with economies in transition, including Ukraine, have opened up as a result of the formation of integrated missions by the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme in this field. We hope that these missions will be given permanent status.

We place great hope in assistance by the international community in mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. I must say that after the appointment of United Nations Under-Secretary-General Mr. Eliasson as the United Nations Coordinator of International Cooperation for Chernobyl, activities in this area have acquired new impetus. I hope his efforts will find support in the General Assembly and will contribute to strengthening international cooperation for this purpose.

In addition to the expenditures needed to mitigate the after-effects of the Chernobyl disaster, which account for a considerable part of the national income, the losses resulting from the imposition of economic sanctions by the Security Council against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have become another great negative factor for our economy. Consequently, by the end of 1993, Ukraine will have suffered direct losses of more than $4 billion in the State sector alone.

Today we need real efforts on the part of the international community to assist Ukraine in overcoming the negative impact of the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on Ukraine's economy as well as on the economies of a number of other countries. Our delegation is ready to propose a draft resolution which would deal with the implementation of the relevant recommendations of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Regretfully, the serious economic difficulties associated with the factors that I have mentioned were not taken into consideration when the international community last year adopted the decision, contrary to the provisions of the United Nations Charter, to increase Ukraine's contribution to the United Nations regular budget by 58 per cent. The assessment imposed on Ukraine is not fully commensurate with its capacity to pay, and is a great burden on its economy. As a result of great efforts, this year we have managed to contribute $6.5 million to the United Nations regular budget, which otherwise could have been directed at solving the problems caused by Chernobyl. However, we cannot meet our financial obligations in full, for the reasons I have mentioned.

In this context, the Government of Ukraine urges a reconsideration of the scale of assessments for the United Nations regular budget and an amendment of the existing system of financing United Nations peace-keeping operations. Our delegation is ready to offer grounds for this position during discussion of the relevant items by the Fifth Committee.

The world has experienced great changes since the foundation of the United Nations. This is understandable, for, as Heraclitus said, "Nothing endures but change". That is why the issue of reforming the United Nations system is a quite natural one. Current realities raise new problems for the world community. Even though the danger of a global nuclear conflict has been practically eliminated, the "local" wars and regional conflicts breaking out all over the world are causing serious concern.

Interethnic armed conflicts and economic instability create favourable grounds for terrorism, the arms trade and the production and trafficking of drugs, and directly affect the security of United Nations Member States. The Chernobyl nuclear power station disaster, the environmental disorder in the Aral Sea area, the danger of an ecological catastrophe as a result of destruction of tropical forests and the depletion of the Earth's ozone layer are but a very incomplete list of the ecological problems facing mankind.

The need for change is also becoming especially urgent and even inevitable as a result of the significant events of the past few years that have radically redrawn the political map of the world; more than two dozen new independent States have emerged, thus considerably increasing the United Nations family. Let me extend to them my sincere congratulations.

Ukraine shares the view that the present quantitative composition of the Security Council, its functioning and its working methods require appropriate adjustments, taking into consideration the new regional realities and the appearance of new participants in the international community. Implementing this proposal would increase the Council's degree of legitimacy as the body that is entrusted by the United Nations Member States with the principal responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. At the same time, it is important to preserve the Council's ability to respond effectively to emergencies that require prompt intervention.

In changing the structure of the United Nations Security Council, it is very important to take into account the existence, beyond its present membership, of participants in the international community that are potentially capable of playing an important role in the Organization's activities at the present time and that have substantial financial obligations to the United Nations. It is also very important to preserve in the Security Council the basic principle of equitable geographic representation.

The working methods of the most representative United Nations body - the General Assembly - also require modification. It is in our interest to direct its activities, to the maximum possible extent, towards further consolidating the principles of justice, democracy and development. The delegation of Ukraine supports the decisions of the forty-seventh session aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the General Assembly and at rationalizing the work of its Main Committees.

We are ready for further dialogue on the issues concerning structural changes in the sessional and subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly. This means, in particular, further decreasing the number of resolutions that are repeated and duplicated from year to year and redistributing the functions of subsidiary bodies.

In our view, the reform should also involve the activities of the main economic and social forum of the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council, and should also be reflected in the structure and working methods of the Organization's Secretariat. Ukraine fully supports the actions of Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, aimed at extending the reforms in the Secretariat, and who is acting firmly in order to increase the role and authority of the Organization, in keeping with the requirements of the time. We are facing the task of reorienting the United Nations social and economic activities in order to implement specific projects in the interest of all States, including those now on the way to the free market.

For the reforms to be successful, it is also important to ensure, in practice, real zero growth in the Organization's budget, and the effective use of its financial assets by reorientating them towards priority fields of activity.

The United Nations will soon mark its fiftieth anniversary. This jubilee is a special date in the calendar of international life, but, moreover, it will be celebrated at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is well known that all historic dates look towards the future. Therefore, the best way to celebrate this anniversary is to concentrate on outstanding issues, analyse the emerging situation and determine what the prospects are for future development. That is why, perhaps, it is time for the world community to get together, as it did after the world wars, and creatively reappraise the realities of the post-confrontational period and, where necessary, amend existing structures of security and cooperation and division of labour in order to determine the world order for the twenty-first century. These are the considerations that impelled President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine to initiate the idea of convening, within the framework of the United Nations fiftieth anniversary celebrations in 1995, a global international peace summit conference.

In advancing the idea of holding such an event under the auspices of the United Nations, we take it as given that this is the Organization that can convene global conferences of Ministers and Heads of States or Governments in order to weigh up complex issues and suggest comprehensive solutions. Therefore, all our thoughts today are directed towards tomorrow, to which we should come having discarded the heavy burden of the confrontational era and having drawn upon the best of the Organization's past activities, which have enriched us with invaluable knowledge. From the collective wisdom manifested in the activities of the United Nations, we can tap the optimism so necessary for mankind today, and the faith in its positive strength and in its future.

In conclusion, I should like to cite some words by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, which he pronounced during his recent visit to Ukraine:

> "Deep involvement in the great currents of history gives Ukraine a special insight into the world today. It qualifies Ukraine to play a full role in the new United Nations."

I wish to assure you that Ukraine will spare no effort in continuing to prove the rightness of his words.

Mr. ***DURÃO BARROSO*** (Portugal) *(spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation):* Mr. President, I should like to begin by congratulating you on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly and by expressing our confidence in your ability to steer the proceedings of the present session.

I also express our gratitude to the outgoing President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev, for the dedicated way in which he fulfilled his mandate and contributed to the rationalization of the work of the Assembly.

I also congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whose initiative and commitment have already made it possible to take important steps towards a thorough reform of the United Nations and towards strengthening its international credibility as an irreplaceable instrument of peace.

The universal calling of the United Nations, enshrined in its Charter, gives special meaning to the accession of six new Member States, Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, the Slovak Republic, Monaco and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; they have reinforced the legitimacy of this forum and assumed, before the international community, the responsibility entailed in the full exercise of national sovereignty.

My Belgian colleague, in his capacity as current President of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities, has already had the opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the 12 member States; Portugal fully subscribes to that statement. I should, however, like to refer to a number of issues that are of particular importance to my country.

The period of global transition now before us is marked by particularly contradictory signs.

On the one hand, the *détente* that surfaced with the end of the cold war has led to an increase in regional integration and the strengthening of cooperation between States, and has brought to life the concept of complementing the activities of the United Nations with those of regional organizations and arrangements.

On the other hand, violent nationalistic claims have re-emerged and old and seemingly forgotten antagonisms have resurfaced, leading to an unexpected outbreak of conflicts that threaten the internal cohesion of States and international peace and security.

In this context, and more so than ever, the role of the United Nations collective security system, now back on the front line of international relations, seems decisive. For this reason, we attach great significance to the ongoing restructuring of the Secretariat. We also deem particularly important the reform of the Security Council, which has special responsibilities and is now free to accomplish its original mission and to emerge as the driving force behind the Organization's political activities in maintaining stability and peace.

Other organizations, such as the European Community, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), have, in their turn, an important role to play in consolidating democracy, maintaining stability and promoting development in the entire European region.

It is essential for close cooperation to be established between those bodies and the United Nations - which has a primary and universal responsibility - so as to avoid duplication and to enhance what each can contribute to the search for peace and stability.

Peace-keeping operations have recently undergone a considerable expansion, and we are witnessing the deployment of large numbers of men and women in situations of various natures, including the protection of humanitarian assistance missions and preventive diplomacy initiatives. The involvement of military contingents in those operations requires clear political aims as well as unity of command and close and permanent coordination between the Secretariat and the interested parties, namely the contributing States and those States that may be able to offer, in a constructive manner, a political contribution to the peace processes.

Resolving the conflicts of today, building peace and preventing the conflicts of tomorrow will be no simple task. The demands and expectations that fall upon the United Nations have no historical precedent, and so every effort must be made to turn "An Agenda for Peace" into a reality.

Only then will the Organization be able to cope with the present and future challenges of maintaining peace, giving humanitarian assistance and providing aid for development.

Unfortunately, as I speak, the United Nations is confronting its greatest financial crisis in 48 years of existence and is facing the risk of not being able to assume its responsibilities in the important domain of maintaining international security.

This question remains the cornerstone of the future activity of the United Nations. If it remains unanswered, the consequences for the United Nation credibility and for world peace will be dramatic.

An important development that has resulted from the end of the cold war concerns respect for human rights, which are inalienable and universal and figure above all other considerations when we look at a particular political regime or model of society. We believe that it is necessary for the international community today to judge violations of human rights without double standards.

In this respect, I should like to stress the importance of the final declaration of the Vienna Conference, which emphasizes fundamental ideas and principles, specifically, those that concern the responsibilities of the international community in this area and define human rights as a priority for the United Nations. With this aim, it is now urgent for the General Assembly to discuss, without delay, the establishment of the post of high commissioner for human rights.

A commonality of values that reflect the dignity of the human person is an indispensable component of a better international order allowing the development of peaceful and lasting international relations. Thus, together with peace, development and democracy, we consider human rights to be one of the basic principles that should govern international society.

It is precisely because of the imperatives of human solidarity, and because we believe that the international community has an important role to play, that Portugal, both as a State and as a member of the European Community, is following with deep concern the conflict that, for the last two years, has been devastating parts of the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Portugal reiterates its firm position that only a settlement accepted by the three parties can put an end to this blood-stained chapter in European history.

The Portuguese Government truly regrets the interruption of the latest negotiating round in Geneva at a time when an agreement seemed within reach.

We once again urge all the parties involved in the conflict to show the necessary good will and flexibility so as to put an end to the suffering of the affected populations. Portugal considers that it is extremely urgent for a viable and just peace agreement to be signed: Only thus will the conditions for a return to peace be met.

Lastly, I wish to pay a tribute to the United Nations Protection Force - in which Portugal has the privilege of being included - to the European Community monitoring mission and to all humanitarian organizations operating in the area of the former Yugoslavia for the tasks they have performed under circumstances of particular hardship.

Portugal, a country which is historically and culturally linked to Africa, is profoundly aware of the unparalleled, appalling and ever-deteriorating living conditions prevailing in vast regions of the continent. Today, Africa certainly deserves the international community's special attention. It is in Africa that we should concentrate our principal efforts to end wars that are sometimes forgotten, but that are laying waste to large areas, and it is to Africa that we should be directing economic resources in quantities commensurate with the unparalleled scale of the problems it is facing. Only by increasing trade flows, economic ties and humanitarian assistance can we provide a degree of certainty for the success of democratization and progress.

I should like to refer also to the utmost importance that we attach to the work of the Organization of African Unity in the search for solutions to bring an end to the conflicts that overshadow Africa.

In Africa, there are five countries that officially use Portuguese. With these countries we have steadily deepened our ties in all areas. Based on a common culture and values, we are developing, together with Brazil and these African countries, a true community of Portuguese-speaking nations that is characterized by solidarity and tolerance.

It was precisely because of these special ties that my Government interceded in the Angolan conflict. The mediation efforts it deployed there, together with the United States and Russia, resulted in the signing in Lisbon of the *Acordos de Paz* on 31 May 1991. The year and a half of peace that followed those agreements raised in all the Angolan people the legitimate expectation that almost 30 years of war were coming to an end. It also revealed stimulating signs of economic recovery and the advent of a new era of democracy and national reconciliation. Angolans therefore participated massively in the elections of last September. The resurgence of war in Angola cause by UNITA's failure to accept the results of the elections calls for a new effort from the international community to re-establish the cease-fire and to safeguard the democratic process, in accordance with the legitimate wishes for peace and democracy of the Angolan people.

Portugal welcomed the adoption on 15 September of Security Council resolution 864 (1993), in which the Council, in the wake of previous resolutions and under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, decided upon a set of important measures.

I remain convinced that dialogue is possible, and that only through direct negotiations between the Government of Angola and UNITA can a lasting solution and a durable peace be found. I therefore once again urge UNITA to return to the negotiating table, on the basis of the *Acordos de Paz* and full acceptance of the outcome of the September 1992 elections and the Abidjan guidelines, which were reached with the invaluable help of President Houphouet-Boigny and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

I applaud the peace initiatives undertaken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, to which Portugal, together with the two other countries of the troika of observers, the United States and Russia, has given its strongest support.

Only with the restoration of peace will it be possible to bring about an end to the suffering of the Angolan people and make possible the provision of the much-needed humanitarian assistance that the international community is ready to provide. In this respect, the efforts already made by the specialized agencies of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross are to be commended.

Regarding Mozambique, the role of the United Nations in conducting the peace process is for us a source of satisfaction. In this context, we welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 850 (1993), which is a sign of the Organization's unequivocal commitment to bringing this process to a satisfactory conclusion.

Portugal is deeply involved in the Mozambique peace process, not only through its active contribution to the United Nations Operation in Mozambique but also through its participation in the structures created by the General Peace Agreement and through our contributions pledged during the donors' conference last December.

We also welcome the results of the recent meeting between the President of Mozambique and the leader of RENAMO, which represented a breakthrough and gave reason for hope in a future of peace and prosperity in Mozambique.

The positive outcome of that meeting, namely, the agreement on the issues of territorial administration and police, has been recognized by Security Council resolution 863 (1993), in which all parties are urged to implement without delay all the provisions of the General Peace Agreement so that the elections can be held in October 1994 at the latest.

Concerning South Africa, we are following events there closely, in particular the multiparty negotiations, which we hope will meet with success and constitute the foundations of a new, multiracial reality.

The withdrawal of significant forces in South African society from those negotiations is a cause for concern, and could have a negative impact on the normal course of the transition process, which, as we all hope, will end with the holding of elections next year.

The spread of violence in South Africa provides a special cause for concern, as pointed out by the European Community observer mission in South Africa and the Goldstone Commission, in both of which Portugal is participating actively. We deeply regret the violence, which cannot but jeopardize the path to national reconciliation.

We must stress, however, the positive aspect, namely the progress achieved with the 7 September agreement at the multiparty negotiations on the creation of the Transitional Executive Council. This was achieved by the efforts of the various parties that believe in a consensus solution for the political transition in South Africa.

I should also like to refer to Mr. Nelson Mandela's praiseworthy appeal, before the Special Committee against Apartheid, for an end to the economic sanctions imposed against South Africa, an appeal which constitutes a valuable encouragement to the process of political reform initiated by President F. W. de Klerk.

Leaving now the African continent, I would say that Portugal, because of its very important legal, moral and historic responsibilities in the case, continues to devote, as a matter of priority, particular attention to the question of East Timor, a Non-Self-Governing Territory recognized by the United Nations as being under Portuguese administration, its decolonization process not having been completed.

I should like to reaffirm, at this rostrum, my country's position of principle on this question: Portugal accepts in full the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and Security Council regarding East Timor. These resolutions reaffirm the need to apply, in the case of East Timor, the essential principles and rules adopted by this Organization on decolonization; those contained not only in the Charter, but in the historic resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) as well. The rejection of military conquest as the basis for claiming territorial enlargement, the need to respect East Timor's territorial integrity and the right of its people to self-determination are clearly established in those resolutions.

We remain firmly committed to achieving, in a peaceful and negotiated manner, a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement to this question. That settlement must not fail to meet the standards of international law and must fully respect the legitimate rights of the East Timorese, who are those most directly concerned and who have been the principal victims of this painful and long-protracted problem.

I should especially like to applaud the efforts of the Secretary-General - and those of his collaborators - under whose auspices talks have been held with Indonesia aimed at settling this issue. We do recognize how very difficult this task is as a result of the wide gap between the positions of the parties on the substance of the question, which is the conclusion of the process of the decolonization of the Territory. Three rounds of discussions have already taken place at the Ministerial level, and we are in the process of adopting a set of confidence-building measures in order to improve the atmosphere of dialogue and to foster the advancement of the process.

Allow me to quote, in this context, a passage of the progress report submitted, just a few days ago, by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly:

> "Equally important and intrinsically linked to the peace process is the human rights situation in East Timor. The improvement of the conditions in East Timor is *sine qua non* to progress in the talks". *(A/48/418, para. 5)*

I am sorry to have to say that, unfortunately, the human rights situation prevailing in the territory continues to elicit condemnation on the part of the international community. The resolutions adopted this year by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and by its Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities are a clear demonstration of this. We sincerely hope that steps will be taken that will bring about a tangible and genuine improvement of the situation in the territory and that this can be monitored without obstruction. I therefore call upon all Governments and human rights organizations to continue to keep a close eye on the situation in East Timor.

We are witnessing events of great significance in other parts of the world. Allow me to emphasize those which merit our particular attention.

Portugal remains faithful to the construction of an enlarged and strengthened Europe. We are close, therefore, to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and, guided by that objective, we propose to contribute through our participation in the framework of the European Community with a view to enhancing dialogue as well as political and economic cooperation. This approach will ensure peace, stability and economic well-being.

In this context of the joint responsibility of all actors on the international scene, we should encourage the ongoing political and economic reforms in the States that have emerged from the collapse of the former Soviet Union aimed at a peaceful evolution towards democratic societies based on the rule of law and fundamental human rights. We support their progressive integration into the international economy, which will prevent the political division of the past from being replaced with a new economic gap.

Allow me to salute at this point President Yeltsin for his courage and determination to carry on without interruption the process of political and economic reform that is indispensable for the complete democratization and development of the Russian Federation.

We lend our unequivocal support to all the efforts made by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the United Nations - which constitute a good test for cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations - to reach peaceful settlements to the disputes that have arisen on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Regarding nuclear arms control and disarmament, Portugal considers the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be an instrument of major importance, and looks forward to its indefinite extension at the 1995 Review Conference. Portugal urges all the parties that have not yet done so to ratify it, and reiterates the need for all the nuclear-weapon States that have emerged from the former Soviet Union to implement and comply with the obligations resulting from the START I and START II Treaties and the Lisbon Protocol.

At this point, allow me to stress the importance my Government attaches to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, to which my country has recently presented its candidature for full membership.

I wish to refer here to the current negotiations that are seeking to conclude the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade talks. While we hope for their successful conclusion, which we consider to be fundamental for the world economy, we also believe that the result should reflect a global and balanced solution based on an opening of markets and a reinforcement of the rules of international trade.

I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Israel and the leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization for the realism, lucidity, courage and also imagination they displayed with the conclusion of the recent agreement, which represents a historic step towards the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace for the Middle East based upon the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. The agreement will certainly lend a new and encouraging vitality to the peace process in both its bilateral and multilateral tracks, irreversibly consolidating the latest developments.

Geographical proximity and historic and cultural ties justify the genuine attention with which my country is following the evolution of the situation in the Maghreb. Portugal has stressed, within the European Community and in other international forums, the importance of that region to security and stability in the Mediterranean. In this sense, the declaration of the Heads of State and Government at the Lisbon meeting of the Council of Europe set out a new approach to a political, economic, social and cultural dialogue between the European Community and the Maghreb.

Portugal has centuries-old relations of friendship with Latin America. Our special relationship with Brazil cannot be overemphasized. We are therefore in a position, in the spirit of the recent Ibero-American Summit in Salvador da Bahia, to enhance dialogue and cooperation with this region. In this respect, I should like to stress the importance we attach to an agenda for development in the advancement of a constructive and effective dialogue aimed at identifying and exploring new forms of solidarity in encouraging international cooperation for development.

In respect of the activities of the European Community, we have been striving to strengthen European ties with Latin America, through the San José process and the Rio group, by encouraging the efforts - which have already made progress possible - aimed at increasing respect for democratic institutions and human rights and developing new forms of economic integration.

I should also like to mention the current negotiations on the preservation of natural resources and the maintenance of environmental balance. The obligations of States go beyond the mere signature of multilateral treaties. At stake is a legacy to future generations of sufficient, conserved and renewable resources to ensure their well-being.

All efforts in that direction deserve the commitment of the international community as a whole, through the implementation of policies of a continental or even global scope. The Rio Conference was merely a step on the long road to convincing the world of the need to preserve the environment and to maintain the balance between the means of production and the human component without resorting to destruction and waste.

It is now important to put into practice the decisions of the Rio Conference in order to give expression to the measures decided on there. Portugal will not fail to do its part, in the full realization that only then shall we be able to build a future for coming generations.

At this point in its history, the United Nations is facing an unprecedented opportunity and, for the first time, can play the role originally intended for it, without restriction, in the resolution of conflicts and the maintenance of international stability and as the custodian of respect for human rights.

We are all committed to providing a positive contribution to meeting this challenge. Portugal, for its part, will do everything possible to achieve these ambitious goals.

Mr. SOLANA MADARIAGA (Spain) *(interpretation from Spanish):* I should like first of all, Mr. President, to convey to you my warmest congratulations. Your election to the presidency of this Assembly is a clear acknowledgement of your personal qualities and diplomatic skills and is a tribute to your country, the Republic of Guyana. We are pleased that you were nominated as a candidate by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, with which my country has particularly close and cooperative relations.

I should also like to pay tribute to and greet warmly Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The United Nations needs his proven competence and political experience in order to face the numerous challenges before us at the end of the century. You may rest assured, Mr. Secretary-General, that in carrying out your complex tasks you can count on the firm cooperation of the Spanish authorities.

Allow me also to convey at this time to the Government and the people of India our deepest sympathy for and solidarity with the victims of the earthquake that ravaged that country yesterday.

Over the last year the universality of the United Nations has once again been enhanced by the admission of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Eritrea, Monaco and Andorra as new Members. I welcome them all, and most particularly Andorra, a neighbour of Spain with which we are linked by special ties of history, culture and deep friendship.

A few days ago Belgium's Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, set forth our common points of view in this general debate. On behalf of the Spanish delegation, I shall mention some issues that I think deserve special attention.

A year ago, when I addressed this Assembly for the first time, I referred, as did many other speakers, to the fundamental changes that had taken place in the world since the middle of the last decade. It is the Spanish Government's firm conviction that those changes have led to the advent of a new era. The United Nations has a great opportunity to play an effective, central role in harmonizing world-wide the efforts of the international community in order to achieve the common purposes embodied in the Charter.

Thus, it seems that the time has come to strengthen our Organization by providing it with the necessary human and material resources to enable it to carry out its goals. We must also think about the measures necessary for a possible revision of the Charter.

A review of the Security Council is an item on our agenda, and this needs to be approached in a constructive spirit and with the aim of increasing its representativeness and ensuring that its actions be not only fast but also effective. Such a review should be based on the criteria established in Article 23 of the Charter, that is to say, taking into account the contribution of Member States to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographical distribution.

We believe that the time has come for a moderate increase in the membership of the Council so as to reflect the increase in the number of Members of the Organization since 1963, when, for the first time, it was decided to expand the Council's membership.

We also deem it appropriate to consider the creation of new categories: one that would enable certain States to become permanent members without the right of veto, and another that would allow more frequent non-permanent membership in the Council to certain States with weight and influence in international relations that have the capacity and political will to contribute significantly to the fulfilment of the purposes and principles of the United Nations. All this would undoubtedly serve to put our Organization in a better position to face the challenges of maintaining peace and international security.

In this context, it is also necessary to make reforms in order to deal with the changing nature of the tasks assigned to the peace operations established by the Security Council. The traditional concept of peace-keeping operations, embracing monitoring of cease-fire agreements, interposition between adversarial forces and the establishment of confidence-building measures - all by primarily military means - has been expanded, increasingly encompassing new, non-military aspects. These new tasks range from humanitarian assistance to nation-building, and include the monitoring of elections and of the observance of human rights. Nearly 100,000 men and women from all over the world are currently serving in the framework of these increasingly complex and demanding operations.

The United Nations has made a commendable effort to adapt the structure and functioning of peace operations to the new exigencies. We should pursue our efforts in this direction, as we are convinced that it is always preferable to solve a conflict under the aegis of the United Nations than through the unilateral action of a Power or group of Powers outside the framework of the Organization.

Here I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to some relevant questions regarding the proper functioning of peace operations and to offer some ideas and suggestions aimed at enhancing their performance and effectiveness.

When establishing a peace operation, the Security Council should pay the utmost attention to defining accurately its mandate. The Council should also receive periodic information on the development of the operation. Consultation mechanisms should be established with those States that have a special interest, because of their involvement in the operation or their troop contributions.

Special attention should also be given to questions of safety. Acts of violence against the Blue Helmets have increased alarmingly because of the growing complexity and risks of the operations. The issue of safety should be considered most seriously. In this regard we have examined with the greatest interest the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council and the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations. We believe that the use of force against United Nations personnel must be regarded as unacceptable interference in the exercise of the responsibilities entrusted to the Security Council by the Charter. When such acts occur, the Council should take appropriate measures, the first of which should be to hold responsible the perpetrators of the acts.

The Spanish Government considers it imperative that the appropriate financial resources be made available to the United Nations in timely fashion to meet the cost of these operations. We all share the responsibility for ensuring a sound financial and administrative basis for peace operations. Before a new operation is established, an estimate of its financial implications should be presented to the Council.

A the same time, the task assigned to the Security Council in terms of peace-keeping and peace enforcement should not lead us to forget the competence of the General Assembly on budgetary questions and in the field of preventive diplomacy, especially peace-building. With the cooperation of United Nations operational activities, the General Assembly must play an important role in this overall approach to international security, as is referred to by the Secretary-General in his "An Agenda for Peace".

Neither should the Secretariat be overlooked. Its structure and logistical capacity for managing peace operations need to be reviewed and expanded. We applaud the Secretary-General's efforts in this respect.

Aware of the crucial importance taken on by peace operations, Spain - which has participated and continues to participate through a large number of military and civilian observers in various operations, particularly in Central America and southern Africa - decided a year ago to send a military contingent of about 1,000 soldiers to Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

Within the framework of the increasingly necessary cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, my country sent observers to help in monitoring compliance with the sanctions imposed against Serbia and Montenegro and is maintaining naval units in the Adriatic. Spanish personnel also take part in the observer missions of the European community and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

The people and the Government of Spain are proud of the work being done by our forces and observers. I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to those who have given their blood and their lives while serving in these peaceful humanitarian missions of the Organization.

Since the beginning of the terrible conflict in the former Yugoslavia the Spanish people and Government have done their best to alleviate the suffering of the population and have contributed, within the framework of the Security Council and the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, to the development of a political process aimed at achieving a peaceful solution acceptable to all parties. We have all been appalled by the cruelty of that war and frustrated by the endless negotiations.

It is only fitting to acknowledge the splendid work accomplished, under extremely difficult circumstances, by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). We would also express gratitude for the skill and dedication of the co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

Provided they can rely on the parties' basic goodwill and capacity for compromise, their efforts should lead to an agreement before this coming winter brings with it a dreadful human catastrophe. If the hoped for agreement is reached, the international community and the Organization will then be faced with a new challenge, that of guaranteeing implementation of the peace agreement through the establishment of a peace-keeping operation under the auspices and authority of the United Nations. Spain would be prepared to contribute to such a force.

This year the Security Council decided to establish an International Tribunal to bring to trial those charged with serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. We believe that this crucial step will also encourage at this session of the General Assembly the speedy completion of work leading to the establishment of a permanent international criminal tribunal with universal jurisdiction.

In the past few months important developments have taken place in various other parts of the world.

My Government is following with anxiety and hope the recent events in Russia - with anxiety, because at one time it appeared that the internal stability of that country and, therefore, of Europe and the rest of the world, was in jeopardy, but also with hope that the Russian people themselves will become the masters of their own destiny.

We are concerned about the worsening conflict in Abkhazia and the continued confrontation in Nagorny-Karabakh between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. We appeal to the wisdom and capacity for dialogue of all the parties involved and reiterate our support for the peace efforts of the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

In Angola the process of restoring democratic normality and coexistence has been seriously hampered by UNITA's refusal to accept the outcome of free and fair elections, thus preventing the implementation of the Bicesse Accords. This has compelled the Security Council to impose sanctions on UNITA in the hope that its leadership will reconsider its attitude and begin to cooperate in good faith to put an end to a conflict of catastrophic human proportions.

We wish to recall that a number of the problems arising from the war between Iraq and Kuwait are still unresolved, among them the exchange of prisoners and the return of stolen assets by the invader. The fact that Iraq has not yet recognized either the existence of Kuwait as a sovereign State, Member of the United Nations, the demarcation of the border between the two countries, which was recently confirmed by the Security Council, constitutes a serious obstacle to peace.

The persistence of those and other conflicts should not make us forget the progress achieved in the solution of many others.

Here we would especially mention the success achieved in Cambodia through the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), with the holding last May of elections for a Constituent Assembly, elections that paved the way to national unity and reconciliation.

In the Middle East, the serious obstacles that were threatening to scuttle the peace process launched two years ago in Madrid have been overcome. The mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), along with the signing in Washington on 13 September of an Agreement on the establishment of an autonomous Palestinian regime in Jericho and Gaza, is a development of far-reaching significance. Spain welcomes this fundamental step in the tortured history of the Middle East and is prepared, together with other countries, to maintain its political and economic support in order to ensure that the Agreement between the Palestinians and Israelis becomes effective. We are aware that the process is fraught with difficulties, but we believe that they can be surmounted with the same courage and imagination already displayed in achieving the recent agreements, and with the support of the international community.

In Africa, new developments have taken place, although not without some delay and difficulties. In Mozambique we have witnessed the implementation of the General Peace Agreement, with the invaluable cooperation of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ). In Somalia, the Security Council has given the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) one of the broadest mandates ever conferred upon a United Nations operation. It cannot be denied that problems of internal adjustment have been caused by the very novelty and magnitude of the tasks entrusted to UNOSOM II, and they will have to taken into account in future peace-keeping operations. Nevertheless, the Operation's contribution has been vital in reducing the consequences of a catastrophe caused by natural disasters and armed rivalries that have claimed hundreds of thousands of victims.

Turning to the question of Western Sahara, I wish to express Spain's full support for the efforts being made by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to find a solution to the outstanding problems that will make possible the holding of a free and fair referendum on self-determination. That referendum will pave the way for the climate of understanding and cooperation that is necessary to deal with the challenges in the region. My country resolutely supports the process of integration in the North of Africa and the development of stronger links between Europe and the Maghreb.

We also welcome the progress made in the transitional process in South Africa, although we regret the fact that violence still holds sway in certain areas. The progress made in the drafting of a Constitution and the prompt establishment of the Transitional Executive Council are the best possible foundations for the holding of general elections in 1994 to prepare the way for a truly representative Parliament and a democratic South Africa that will be able to find its true place in the Organization and in the international community.

In Latin America, a number of recent events deserve special consideration.

I should mention first the process of consolidation of democracy through the free election of civilian Presidents and Parliaments in nearly the whole of the continent. That fact, enhanced by a number of forums such as the Rio Group, the Central American Summits or the Ibero-American Summits, has reversed attempts to violate the legitimacy of the democratic process.

Latin America continues to place special emphasis on the use of negotiation, mediation and conciliation in solving its conflicts, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter.

Respect for international law and democracy are the principles that have guided and will continue to guide the activities of the international community aimed at restoring democratic legality in Haiti. Those principles have also inspired the decisive agreements with regard to the peace process in El Salvador, where we hope the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission and the Commission on the Truth will be implemented. Finally, those same principles will be the basis for reconciliation and development in Nicaragua and Guatemala.

Once again this year I have to mention a matter that, as the Assembly knows, is of fundamental importance to Spain, namely, the decolonization of Gibraltar. I wish to reiterate my Government's firm decision to continue the process of negotiation with the United Kingdom in a constructive spirit and on the basis of the Brussels Declaration of 27 November 1984. Those negotiations should duly take into account the legitimate interests of the population, but be based on the doctrine established by the General Assembly that the decolonization of Gibraltar is not a case of self-determination but of the restoration of the territorial integrity of Spain. The Spanish Government firmly hopes that those negotiations will finally eliminate this anachronism.

In the field of disarmament new challenges have emerged, such as the need to put an end to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Now, more than ever, we need to redouble our efforts to move beyond a period of confrontation that belongs to the past.

There is a pressing need to strengthen the multilateral negotiating forums to enable them to face the new challenges efficiently. In this respect, my country considers that priority should be given to enlarging the Conference on Disarmament, on the basis of a consensus that will enable countries like Spain, which have been participating actively in its work for a long time, to become members.

There is a clear link between international peace and security on the one hand and economic and social development on the other. In this new era, when the United Nations is renewing its efforts to maintain international peace and security, we must note the persistence of deep disparities and serious economic and social problems besetting all countries, in particular the developing countries. To confront these challenges, the reform of the United Nations should extend to the Organization's economic and social machinery. The reforms, which have already begun, should be aimed at achieving more effective functioning and at using available resources more rationally to meet the needs of developing countries.

In that context, let me mention the convening of the first session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. We hope its work will maintain and even intensify the great momentum generated by the Rio Summit on environment and development and lead to the speedy implementation of the commitments made there in Agenda 21.

But it is not enough to repair and fine-tune the machinery we intend to use to deal with the challenges of development. We need clear guidelines by which to steer it unerringly towards the wide range of current needs, in particular those of the developing countries. Hence, we look forward with great interest to the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Development"; in conjunction with "An Agenda for Peace", this will supplement the guidelines for action by the international community with respect to the indivisible equation of world peace and economic and social development.

In that context, I want to recall that the third Ibero-American Summit, held at Salvador de Bahía, Brazil, last July, considered "An agenda for development", with the emphasis on social development. The conclusions adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the 21 participating countries were submitted to the Secretary-General as a contribution to the preparation of his own "Agenda for Development".

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The final document of that Summit stressed the growing interrelationship among the concepts of development, democracy and human rights. It drew attention to the priority that should be given to the fight against poverty both on the governmental level and when allocating resources and creating machinery for international cooperation. Our starting-point should be to promote integrated economic and social development, bearing in mind the three priorities the Secretary-General set out at the last session of the Economic and Social Council: redistribution, integration and protection.

The structure of and developments in the world population give rise to grave uncertainties about their consequences and about the aspirations of developing countries to attain sustainable development. These and other important issues such as large-scale migration, improving the machinery for cooperation, and managing resources for that purpose will be discussed at the International Conference on Population and Development to be held next year at Cairo. We hope that Conference will mark a significant step towards the solution of these questions by addressing together the issues of population, economic growth and sustainable development.

The Spanish Government considers that there is also an urgent need to integrate women into the development process, eliminate discrimination against women and ensure their full participation in the economic, social, cultural, civic and political spheres. We trust that this commitment will be renewed and buttressed by the international community at the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995.

The World Summit for Social Development, the convening of which my country strongly supported from the outset, is to be held at Copenhagen in 1995. It will give a political impetus to improving the living conditions of the most disadvantaged sectors of our populations. It will help promote their social integration and the creation of a concept of social development taking into account the relationship between peace and well-being, while aiming to reduce poverty and increase employment.

Year after year from this rostrum we emphasize our firm intention to build a better world in which the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms will become real and effective. Unfortunately, year after year we are forced to observe that, despite all our efforts, the practices that endanger human life, freedom and security persist. It is therefore no longer enough to state our readiness to step up our efforts; we must now move, in solidarity, to action.

In that respect, the outcome of the Vienna Conference on human rights gives us an excellent opportunity to work steadfastly towards our common goal. We now have a set of universal rules, universally accepted; we must now insist on their obligatory application. There can be no democracy without respect for human rights, and without democracy there cannot be the harmonious, balanced and lasting development to which we all aspire.

For that reason, it is of high importance that we proceed expeditiously to implement the Vienna commitments, in particular the programme of action. In the view of the Spanish Government there are two key issues the resolution of which could lead to unprecedented progress in this area. First, we must agree on the establishment of the office of a high commissioner for human rights; and secondly, we must provide the United Nations Centre for Human Rights with the resources it needs to carry out its mandate fully.

In my statement today I have tried to address the most pressing challenges facing the Organization, challenges inherent in the increasingly free but increasingly uncertain world in which we live. I have also advanced proposals for the reform of the Organization aimed at adapting it to the new circumstances.

It is difficult but necessary that we focus both on the new problems and on the reform of the Organization. Our ability to do this will determine whether the United Nations can increasingly serve as the proper forum for resolving world problems.

Sheikh AL-SABAH (Kuwait) (*interpretation from Arabic):* On behalf of Kuwait, it gives me pleasure to convey to Ambassador Insanally our sincere congratulations on his unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. I take this opportunity to assure him of the support and cooperation of the delegation of Kuwait in recognition of the close ties that exist between our two countries. His ability and skill give us confidence that our deliberation under his leadership will be fruitful.

I am pleased also to pay a tribute to his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, for his able and effective stewardship of the General Assembly at its previous session.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Kuwait, I wish to extend deepest sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of India with respect to the tragedy resulting from the earthquake in that country, which claimed thousands of innocent victims.

Kuwait has been following the impressive role of the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, in developing new modalities of work for the United Nations that are more in line with the sweeping developments, events and changes that are taking place in the world. We cannot but put on record our appreciation of the Secretary-General's tireless efforts and creativity in restructuring and streamlining the world Organization to reflect in a more meaningful manner the realities of the new world situation. He deserves special credit for his promotion of the concept of preventive diplomacy.

Kuwait takes pride in its backing of the United Nations and we do support the new approach it pursues despite the various difficulties it faces and the accusations levelled at it. The United Nations, at the threshold of its fiftieth anniversary, needs from us every material and moral support each and every Member can extend to it. On the other hand, the Organization itself should enhance its effectiveness, streamline its structure and revitalize its organs, especially the Security Council. The Council should reflect more closely the new realities of today's world. It should be more capable of making and preserving peace and more forcefully firm in implementing its resolutions in consonance with the provisions of the Charter.

The United Nations today reflects new world realities, as shown by the recent increase in its membership. Kuwait welcomes the accession to United Nations membership by Eritrea, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Monaco, Andorra and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and trusts that their accession to the Organization's membership will consolidate further the efficacy and universality of multilateralism.

With the end of the cold war and the effectual participation by the United Nations in resolving many international problems, the world today is moving steadily towards the realization of the principle of interdependence and mutual cooperation between members of the international community. The demise of bipolarity and the disappearance of the barriers that used to separate peoples, together with closer contacts through mass communication made available by the technological revolution, have made it possible for every individual to watch world events as they unfold. Thus peoples are now able to react to and interact with global issues in an unprecedented manner. A direct outcome of all that is the constant expansion of the web of interrelated interests, so that regional security has become an inseparable part of global security. Economic and social development issues have now acquired a high priority among the concerns of the international community.

While we in Kuwait support this new tendency, we must stress that movement in the new direction should be humane in concept, civilized in ways and means, pragmatic in modalities and realistic in aims. We also stress that the right of both the individual and the community to development should be accorded top priority among international concerns. In this context, we consider that the first and foremost human right is the right to secure essential necessities of living. Social and economic development at various levels is a close second. Kuwait believes that development should be addressed collectively and that is the most effective way of ensuring the availability of its essential ingredients, so that no region or group of nations should monopolize world resources at the expense of whole continents which remain hostage to the cycle of want and poverty.

We view with satisfaction the new approach of dealing collectively with hotbeds of tension, as envisioned by the Charter. Here we have in mind the practical and effective application of the concept of collective security in the context of which regional conflicts are viewed as direct threats to world peace and stability and not as mere threats to regional security. Therefore we demand that any conflict should be dealt with firmly and expeditiously in order to avoid its worsening, opening the door and allowing terrorism to fly in the face of international legality and flout the new approach.

It is in keeping with this conviction that Kuwait, despite its difficult circumstances, participates in the United Nations humanitarian operations in Somalia, our sister country. Such participation bespeaks our commitment to the new United Nations approach and our support for putting it into practice. Kuwait considers that the international presence in Somalia is indispensable if the Somali people are to be saved from destruction and chaos and if Somalia itself is to survive as an independent country. Indeed, the United Nations peace-keeping operations, which now total 17, as stated by the Secretary-General in his report on the work of the Organization (A/48/1), require from us all full material support, practical participation and political backing. Accordingly, the Government of Kuwait announces from this podium that it will voluntarily bear two thirds of the costs of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM). This is to demonstrate our firm belief in the true role of UNIKOM in safeguarding the security and peace in our region. It represents also a consolidation of the concept of collective security and the United Nations role therein.

Kuwait believes that the most important underpinnings of the new world approach are: compliance with established norms of conduct in international relations; respect for the principles of international law; rejection of interference in the internal affairs of other States; rejection of seeking gains and concessions at the expense of neighbouring countries; the resolution of problems by dialogue rather than by force; and the renunciation of terrorism as a means of revenge.

The Iraqi regime invaded and occupied the State of Kuwait. However, the adamant international will embodied by the United Nations helped liberate Kuwait in a historic act that led to a clean and tidy elimination of that horrendous crime. Subsequently, Iraq accepted the consequences of its crime as set out in Security Council resolution 687 (1991) which contains the provisions of fair and binding solutions for the false Iraqi claims regarding Kuwait. It also outlines the conditions for dealing with the consequences and underlying reasons of the Iraqi invasion. The quintessence of resolution 687, which was accepted unconditionally by Iraq, is the reaffirmation of the sovereignty and independence of Kuwait. It also called for the utilization of United Nations technical assistance in the demarcation of boundaries between Kuwait and Iraq on the basis of the documents exchanged between the two countries in October 1963. In implementation of the provisions of the said resolution, the United Nations set up a Boundary Demarcation Commission which successfully completed its work last May and has issued its final report which contains the definitive map of land and maritime boundaries between Kuwait and Iraq (document S/25811).

Kuwait commends the technical Boundary Demarcation Commission and pays tribute to its members for their impartiality, dedication and patience, especially in the face of Iraqi accusations and provocations. Kuwait also pays tribute to the Security Council for adopting two historic resolutions this year. The first, resolution 806 (1993), extended the terms of reference of UNIKOM into a peace-keeping operation with full powers to prevent Iraqi raids into Kuwait and to put an end to riots instigated by the Iraqi regime. Resolution 833 (1993), unanimously adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, reaffirms the commitment of the Security Council to guarantee the inviolability of the international boundary as demarcated by the United Nations technical commission and to consider that boundary as final and inviolable. By so doing, the Security Council has put an end to an amorphous situation which had lasted for far too long and which Iraq exploited in a bid to secure territorial expansion, to exercise regional hegemony, and to gain political, strategic and material concessions at the expense of Kuwait and the other Gulf States. The demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq is a major contribution by the international community to the elimination of a volatile hotbed of regional tension which the Iraqi regime used to exploit in creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust and which culminated in its vicious invasion of the State of Kuwait.

Kuwait responded positively to the Secretary-General's acceptance of the outcome of the border demarcation process. In our response, we also reaffirmed our sincere cooperation with the United Nations despite the fact that Kuwait had voted against some Commission decisions which denied Kuwait its rights in Khowr Zhobeir. Iraq, for its part, responded with two letters to the Secretary-General. The first in May 1992, following the demarcation of the land boundary, and the second in June 1993 following the demarcation of the maritime boundary. Both letters reiterated previous Iraqi claims to what it calls its historical rights. Iraq also rejected the demarcation results and challenged the integrity of the United Nations technical Commission and the validity of its procedures and work. This prompted the Security Council to reprimand Iraq strongly in a presidential statement which it issued on 28 June 1993 and in which it rejected the contents of the aforesaid Iraqi letters and reminded Iraq of its obligations under resolution 687 (1991).

Iraq has unconditionally accepted resolution 687 (1991) in all its provisions and in so doing has undertaken legal, political and moral obligations on which it cannot renege, nor can it fail to abide by the consequences of such obligations because the functions of the technical Commission were not to the liking of its representative on the Commission, who had participated fully, for a whole year, in its work and deliberations and then chose to withdraw from the Commission when he found himself unable to produce substantive documents corroborating Iraq's claims, despite the fact that the Commission pressed him to do so. The stance of the Iraqi regime constitutes a rebellion against Security Council resolutions in defiance of the will of the Council and the international community. This represents an egregious departure from the current global mainstream and warrants firm international resolve to reject the Iraqi regime's practices in both form and substance.

I find it necessary now to emphasize in no uncertain terms that the Iraqi regime remains in its philosophy, behaviour, thinking and nature a threat to regional and global peace and security. It persists in its aggressiveness while it thumbs its nose at the world community, which continues to reject and isolate it with sanctions. Kuwait has confidence in the wisdom of the Security Council and the ability of its members to fulfil their mandate. We trust that they are keen to ensure their collective commitment to the Security Council resolutions and thus compel the Iraqi regime to recognize that it has no option but to begin the complete and documented implementation of all those resolutions to the letter. The Iraqi regime should be made to understand that its desperate endeavours to have the sanctions lifted will be totally futile unless and until it clearly and legally complies with the boundary demarcation decisions as set forth in the relevant Council resolutions, especially resolutions 773 (1992) and 833 (1993). The Iraqi regime must also meet other basic requirements, such as desisting from the false claims made by its official information apparatus which continues to describe Kuwait as part of Iraq and to make other false claims to so-called historical rights. The persistence of and increase in such falsehoods, which emanate from ranking officials of that regime, is a reversal of and retreat from acceptance of the essence of resolution 687 (1991), which represents Iraq's commitment to respect Kuwait's sovereignty, independence and international borders. We have submitted regular reports to the Security Council containing complete verbatim excerpts of the claims made by senior Iraqi officials and the official Iraqi media.

We call upon all Member States of the United Nations to welcome the relevant Security Council resolutions on the border demarcation and the inviolability of boundaries as essential components of the regional security structure. We also expect Member States to demand that the Iraqi regime respect all relevant resolutions and link the lifting of sanctions with its implementation of all Security Council resolutions, particularly those regarding the boundary demarcation and the release of prisoners.

In this context, I should like to recall that the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) issued at its last March session a statement welcoming the demarcation of the boundary between Kuwait and Iraq. The GCC also underscored the demarcation as an underpinning of regional security. Furthermore, the Damascus Declaration States, which include the six GCC countries together with Egypt and Syria, issued a statement last June supporting the demarcation and welcoming the measures taken by the Security Council as positive contributions to stability and security at both the regional and international levels.

Iraq's procrastination in implementing the Security Council resolutions is not limited to the boundary demarcation but extends to a purely humanitarian issue: the release of all prisoners, hostages and detainees of Kuwaiti and third country nationals. Those hostages and prisoners have been languishing in Iraqi prisons and detention camps for some three years now. We trust and hope that the international community will bring pressure to bear on the Iraqi regime to release every one of those innocent men, women and children. Their plight is a stark violation of all the values and concepts associated with the issue of human rights. It is also a case that represents a rejection of the new global approach, which we believe all here are keen to promote with a view to safeguarding human rights in the world.

Kuwait has explored all possible avenues, using all available Arab, Islamic and international channels to persuade the Iraqi regime to comply with the norms of international law, especially its commitments under the Geneva Conventions. To date, the Iraqi regime has made no positive response to the efforts made by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on behalf of those persons. Most recently, it boycotted a meeting organized by the ICRC in Geneva last month to discuss the latest developments of this important and urgent humanitarian matter. The people of Kuwait will feel no relief and enjoy no peace of mind until the very last prisoner is returned to his or her family and homeland.

Iraq has also failed to fulfil its obligation to return the remainder of Kuwaiti property belonging to the private and public sectors in our country. Furthermore, it has neither implemented Security Council resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991), nor has it desisted from oppressing and suppressing its own population in the northern and the southern regions of the country. It continues to resort to acts of terrorism. We in Kuwait share the Iraqi people's pain and suffering by virtue of the brotherhood between our two peoples and our everlasting neighbourhood. It is with particular concern that we see the humiliation of the Iraqi people as the Iraqi regime pursues its atrocities with total disregard for the plight of the Iraqi people and its future. The Iraqi regime has stubbornly rejected the mechanism provided to alleviate the suffering and hardships of the Iraqi people by failing to implement Security Council resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991). Indeed, responsibility for the plight of the Iraqi people lies squarely on the regime itself, which must be held accountable for all the dire consequences of its atrocities.

Kuwait firmly believes that security in the Gulf region is part and parcel of world security. Hence, the international community is responsible for ensuring respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States that fall prey to aggression. Support for States that fall victim to aggression should also be provided by the world community when a conflict breaks out. The consolidation of regional security requires confidence-building among all countries in the region as a basic premise for attaining that common goal. Here, I should like to underline the close ties and complete trust that exist among GCC States. Their cooperation is a substantial contribution to the stability and security of the region. Facts on the ground attest to our common endeavours.

Kuwait is keen to improve its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran on the basis of the principles of good-neighbourliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of each other and respect for sovereignty as specified by the Gulf Cooperation Council Supreme Council. Having said that, Kuwait would like to emphasize the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over its three islands - Abu Mousa, Lesser Tonb and Greater Tonb. Furthermore, Kuwait wishes to put on record its absolute support for all the peaceful measures and means to which the United Arab Emirates resorts in order to regain sovereignty over its islands. Kuwait remains hopeful that dialogue will eventually clear away all the outstanding matters between the two countries. With that aim in view, Kuwait calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran to commit itself to resolving this dispute on the basis of international law and treaties and to ending it by peaceful means.

In the context of the developments that are taking place with regard to the Middle East peace process, Kuwait welcomes the signing of the accord between the people of Palestine and Israel to exercise their right to self-determination, to free their territory from occupation and to build their own national institutions. In keeping with Kuwait's support for every effort made and every avenue chosen by the Palestinian people to further their cause, the Kuwaiti Council of Ministers has issued a statement in which it welcomed this first step towards the full implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Kuwait views this accord as a first step towards the creation of a framework to deal with many details - a process that will require enormous effort and patience on the part of the parties directly involved if a successful conclusion is to be ensured. The accord has indeed ushered in a totally new chapter in the history of the Middle East and the question of Palestine. We hope that, in the new era, negotiation will replace conflict; dialogue will supersede confrontation; and that disputes will be resolved under the rule of international law instead of by force of arms, in consonance with the developing new approach. However, the litmus test will be in the steps that will follow and in the achievements that will be made on the other Arab fronts. In the final analysis, partial or incomplete peace will not last, and a unilateral accord will not lead to a fair and comprehensive peace. From now on we should not look to the past with pain and sorrow; rather, we should look to the future with hope and confidence.

In the end, the success of the peace process hinges on genuine and serious commitment on the part of Israel to implement United Nations resolutions, particularly those that call for complete and unconditional withdrawal from the Syrian Arab Golan. In the same vein, Israel must withdraw its forces from Southern Lebanon, without any further delay, in compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). I take this opportunity to commend the Lebanese Government for its remarkable effort to build national reconciliation in Lebanon. For its part, Kuwait will continue to back the Lebanese people in their efforts to reconstruct and rehabilitate their homeland.

The tragedy of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina continues unabated. That people is the target of brutal aggression by the Serbs and the Croats, who want to impose a *fait accompli* and to make territorial gains by imposing a grossly unjust settlement on the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We call upon the Security Council and the European Community to take all urgent and effective measures to prevent the aggressor from gaining any reward and to refuse to legitimize the outcome of outright aggression. We appeal to the international community to lift the embargo on arms supplies to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to enable its people to exercise their right to self-defence, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

A few days ago, Kuwait was pleased to receive the President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The visit was the culmination of Kuwait's constant support for the struggle of that Muslim nation, and it demonstrated our deep, comprehensive and unwavering commitment to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Kuwait firmly welcomes the agreement that has been reached between the Government of President de Klerk and the other parties involved in the negotiations on the future political and social structure in South Africa. The thrust of this accord is to end the system of apartheid, which divides society into segments whose rights and prerogatives are based on the colour of their skin. We applaud this historic agreement, which will put all the people of South Africa, irrespective of class, on a totally new humanitarian cause, enabling all South Africans to unleash their energies in the building of a new society.

For its part, Kuwait has complied fully with all the boycott regulations. Together with other members of the international community, it contributed to the creation of the effective mechanism that eventually led to the agreement in question. Now we intend to take the necessary measures on the national level to lift sanctions in response to Mr. Nelson Mandela's recent appeal from this rostrum. Our action will be in line with the global trend towards the creation of conditions conducive to the fulfilment of the targets set out in the agreement. My Government will review Kuwaiti national legislation that prohibits dealings with the Government of South Africa, in the light of the national agreement in South Africa, international consensus and the important statement in which Mr. Nelson Mandela called for an end to the economic sanctions while continuing to maintain the ban on conventional and nuclear weapons.

We welcome also the proposal by the Multilateral Negotiating Council and the agreement that has been reached to enable the young Republic of Namibia to have its territorial rights in respect of Walvis Bay and the off-shore islands restored.

Parallel to the heart-warming transformations on the world political arena, there are some significant economic indicators. The issues relating to the world economic situation are of great concern to my Government. In our view, top priority must be given, on the international economic agenda, to the economic plight of the developing countries, especially the most impoverished among them, so that they may be helped to alleviate the severe suffering of their populations.

Convinced that the future of the world and the well-being of its inhabitants require wholesome approaches that balance the use of resources with conservation of the environment, Kuwait has played an active role in the international forums dealing with the questions of the environment and energy. We are extremely keen on the promotion of international cooperation with a view to achieving wider development and removing obstacles that impede it. We believe, however, that priority should be accorded to national and international efforts that aim at achieving overall social and economic development and increasing political stability.

The individual must always be the focus of every development effort. All development policies should be flexible enough to accommodate the ingenuity and creative power of all individuals. This is indeed our guarantee of progress and excellence in human endeavour. International institutions should provide the platform and the framework to harness our national efforts towards that end.

The new international orientation, in its political and economic aspects, presents us with yet another window of opportunity. As interdependent partners, we should forge ahead together so that, together, we may reap the common benefits of the new order.

Mr. HAAVISTO (Finland): I wish to begin by congratulating Ambassador Insanally on his election to the high office of the presidency of the General Assembly. He can rest assured that the delegation of Finland will render him its full support in his challenging task.

On behalf of my Government, I also wish to congratulate and extend a warm welcome to the new Members among us. Their participation in the work of the United Nations will further strengthen the Organization.

Just a few years ago, in a promisingly changing political environment, high hopes were placed in the United Nations. Some of these hopes were fulfilled, others were not. Namibia's independence process is a fine example of nation-building in which the United Nations played a crucial role. Eritrea is another. Let these be examples of wise and patient conciliation and conflict management. Yet another example is South Africa, where today we see irrevocable changes taking place, leading towards a non-racial and democratic society. I wish to express my Government's admiration for the achievements of the parties in South Africa in their work for peace, cooperation and mutual respect. Finland has actively supported the shaping of a new South Africa and will continue to do so.

We have in recent days witnessed yet another example of brave and visionary leadership which can overcome seemingly insuperable obstacles and lead peoples from a state of war and hatred towards reconciliation. I am referring to the peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. In this context I wish to pay a tribute to the Government of Norway for its role in bringing the two parties together. The United Nations must now stand ready to play its part in this important endeavour for peace. Finland, together with the other Nordic countries, was among the first to initiate an international support programme for this historic process.

The United Nations also has to its credit other achievements in recent years. Among the most important have been the rebuttal of the aggression against Kuwait and the restoration of democracy in Cambodia. However, numerous other conflicts have proved very difficult to solve. War is raging in the former Yugoslavia and in Somalia, Angola, Abkhazia and Nagorny-Karabakh. Conflicts persist in Western Sahara and Cyprus. All these conflicts constitute formidable challenges to the international community and to the United Nations.

From that balance sheet of success and failure an important question emerges: how can our Organization be best adapted, reformed and revitalized to face effectively not only the challenges of today but also those of tomorrow? Undoubtedly the United Nations is today a more viable institution than ever before. Nevertheless the many unsolved conflicts illustrate that the United Nations still has serious shortcomings. These stem primarily from the nature of the problems and challenges of the increasingly interdependent global society in which we live.

It is now our responsibility to launch a process of reform of the United Nations. It must cover all of the Organization's agencies, programmes and funds, in both the political and the development fields. It must be undertaken in an integrated manner, with a view to better adapting our instruments of cooperation to the needs of a profoundly changing world.

Many crises seem political in nature but have their roots in social injustices and a lack of economic opportunities. The fulfilment of social needs and the promotion of economic development are necessary elements of sustained political stability. Some significant improvements have been made in this field, too, but their scope and importance are clearly dwarfed by the immensity of the challenges. Human development, human rights and the environment are cases in point.

Thanks to the dynamic initiatives of our Secretary-General, a process of reform of the United Nations is under way. In addition, several Member States have introduced important proposals for reforming and restructuring our Organization. My own country, together with other Nordic countries, has actively participated in this process, particularly as regards peace-keeping and reform of the United Nations work in the economic and social sector and in the area of humanitarian assistance.

World events have forced the United Nations and its Member States to re-examine closely the Organization's capacity to maintain international peace and security. The Charter provisions as well as the structures and machinery created for this purpose reflect a world that was very different from the one we live in today. That is, of course, the reason for the great attention that has been accorded over the past year or two to what traditionally has been called peace-keeping. The concept of peace-keeping is, as a result of increasingly complex operations, going through a period of evolution. Related activities such as preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building are the new tools for maintaining international peace and security.

The United Nations and its Member States must adjust to the rapid growth in and new approaches to peace-keeping operations. The President of the Security Council in his statement of May this year outlined the operational principles in accordance with which such operations should be conducted. My Government fully subscribes to these principles.

The great increase in requests for peace-keeping troops, military observers and monitors makes it necessary, in my Government's view, for the United Nations to adopt stricter and clearer criteria and procedures before launching such operations. The United Nations must not overextend itself; it cannot be present everywhere.

Mandates for peace-keeping operations must be precise and clear. The necessary funding must be secured, and before launching any operations the Security Council must see to it that the required contingents are available. Recent experiences also prove that command structures must be clearly spelled out and subsequently fully adhered too. It is not sufficient for the Security Council to agree on resolutions setting up new operations; all the conditions for their implementation must also be at hand.

We also face new challenges in disarmament and arms control. The nuclear arms race has stopped, but nuclear proliferation still constitutes a serious potential threat to international security and stability. It is vital to ensure that the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime works efficiently. In general, disarmament and arms regulation should be integrated into the broader agenda of international peace and security. This should be reflected both in the United Nations disarmament machinery and in the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. The review of the composition of the Conference on Disarmament would enhance this objective. We regret that no agreement on this issue has been reached so far.

The Security Council is vested with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In carrying out its duties, the Council acts on behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations. Trust and confidence in the Council by all Member States is therefore a crucial factor, affecting its ability to engage in conflict resolution. It is only natural that a review be undertaken of the composition of the Security Council in order to make the Council better reflect today's membership as well as the prevailing political realities.

My Government has an open mind on this question. We are ready to accept a limited increase in the membership of the Council, provided that such a change will not affect negatively the capacity of the Council to perform its tasks. Moreover, there would seem to be a need to review the Council's organization and methods of work. The aim should be to increase transparency and to provide non-members better opportunities to be heard when matters of immediate concern to them are considered by the Council.

It would seem desirable - especially in negotiating the mandates and the financing of peace-keeping operations - to involve to a greater extent non-members of the Council also, as provided for by the Charter. Such involvement would be particularly called for in the case of those States that are potential contributors of troops and logistical support.

Work on revitalizing the General Assembly and rationalizing its activities is also under way. Certain improvements have already been introduced. However, further efforts have to be made to ensure a more meaningful and responsible role for the Assembly. To enhance the Assembly's standing and add weight to its resolutions it is, in our view, necessary to establish clear priorities. It is important to focus the work in the Assembly on these priorities and to reduce the number of items on its agenda.

Indeed, time has come to consider even some radical methods to enhance the effectiveness of the Assembly. One might ask whether a full-fledged General Assembly session every year is really necessary and productive. Alternatively, a high-level political debate and meetings of the Main Committees might be held every other year. Moreover, the President and the Bureau of a session of the General Assembly could perhaps be designated well before the end of the preceding session. That would permit the officers of the General Assembly and the Secretariat better to prepare the work of the General Assembly. These and other ideas merit further consideration.

The economic and social sectors of the United Nations, including the Economic and Social Council itself, are other areas where reforms are being actively discussed. The Nordic countries initiated a reform of the operational activities for development. Although there is virtual agreement on a number of reform issues, there are still details to be settled concerning the governance and financing of the development agencies of the United Nations. I hope that these much needed reforms can be agreed upon by the end of November so that the new structures can be put in place as early as 1994.

During the discussions on the ongoing reforms it has become obvious that the extraordinary extent and rapidity of economic and social change, as well as the challenges of the global environment, necessitate reforms that are even much more profound. We must now devote our efforts to a reorientation of the United Nations system in this new and daunting environment. We should, in particular, clarify our thinking about the institutional and structural linkages between work on peace and security and work on sustainable development. Likewise, we should establish the true priorities in the economic and social sectors as well as in the United Nations system's relations with other international organizations. Such rethinking and reform cannot be carried out during one single session of the General Assembly. It will take a sustained effort over several years, which, in turn, presupposes a consensus on the basic outlines of a reform programme.

The shaping of a consensus is our primary task. The agenda for development which the Secretary-General will present will no doubt have a catalytic effect in this respect, as could the upcoming important conferences on population, social development and gender issues. The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations will, in my view, provide a suitable occasion for launching such an ambitious, fundamental and visionary reform programme.

In order for the United Nations to function effectively it must have a solid executive branch, a Secretariat that has at its disposal sufficient human and financial resources. The Secretary-General has taken several steps to streamline the Secretariat and make it a more efficient tool for implementing the decisions of the Member States. But more needs to be done in order to permit the Secretariat to take initiatives and pursue its intellectual leadership role.

At a time when resources are scarce and so many new tasks have been entrusted to the United Nations, it is clear that a pruning of activities and rationalization of working methods must be done. The cutting of unnecessary and obsolete programmes must continue. It is the task of the Member States to give guidance to the Secretary-General, but also to draw conclusions and take the necessary decisions. The United Nations should apply the same policy of austerity as national Governments in the prevailing economic circumstances.

Perhaps the greatest concern for the United Nations today is the unwillingness of the great majority of Member States to pay their assessed contributions. My delegation has said time and again, and I will repeat it now: Payment of one's dues is not an option. It is an obligation falling on every Member, big or small. Let it be our collective birthday present to the United Nations at the fiftieth anniversary to see to it that by then there is full compliance with the obligation concerning payment of contributions.

Member States, in fulfilling their financial obligations towards the United Nations, have the right to expect full accountability for the resources placed at the disposal of the Organization. It is essential that the Organization exercise prudent economic management and constantly improve the internal control system. We therefore believe that ideas such as the creation of the post of an independent inspector general are well worth considering. The main objective must now be to restore the confidence of the Member States and the general public in our Organization. The United Nations cannot afford to have its public image and integrity tarnished by allegations of mismanagement.

As the United Nations approaches its fiftieth anniversary, humanity is faced with formidable challenges. Meeting them will not be easy. And yet, the United Nations now has a better chance than ever to use its full potential and show leadership for the sake of a better future. "We the peoples of the United Nations, ... united for a better world" has been chosen as the theme for the celebration of our fiftieth anniversary. Let us all together join in making this a reality.

Mr. KASENALLY (Mauritius): On behalf of the Mauritius delegation, it is my pleasure and privilege to extend to Mr. Insanally our heartiest congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. We wish to assure him and members of his Bureau of our full cooperation and support in the tasks that lie ahead of them. The election of a representative of Guyana to the presidency of this Assembly is gratifying in more ways than one and underlines the fact that even the smallest of States belonging to this Organization has a role to play on the international scene and will not shy away from any responsibility that may be entrusted to it, however big the challenge.

We should also like to place on record our appreciation of his predecessor for the commendable manner in which he conducted the deliberations of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Mauritius is pleased to welcome into the family of the United Nations its new Members: Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, Monaco, the Slovak Republic and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We are hopeful that these new Members will uphold and strengthen the ideals enshrined in the Charter of this Organization and we look forward to their active participation in our deliberations.

It is important, in my delegation's view, that I address in the first instance an issue of prime concern to the functioning of our Organization. There is at present much debate and ambivalence about the future role and orientations of the United Nations. While it is generally accepted that the United Nations as a multilateral organization should adapt to and reflect the profound changes that have taken place since its founding, considerable doubt exists on what proposals and practical measures should be adopted to make the United Nations system more effective and forge it into a relevant instrument of global governance. Is the United Nations able to respond to the new demands, opportunities and challenges that have emerged especially since the end of the cold war and still remain true to its Charter? That the United Nations in recent years has already been able to play a more central role in world affairs and assume greater responsibilities in the wide range of social and political problems is an indication that it has earned the growing acceptance of the world community as a legitimate vehicle for addressing significant global issues.

However, beneath the prestige of regained moral stature and recognition that its ideals and message are still valid is the reality that the United Nations administrative structures and institutions are in dire need of reform. The United Nations system remains ill-equipped for the scope of its current operations and activities. The evolving nature of the United Nations will therefore have a crucial impact on the future shape and management of the post-cold-war international economic and political environment.

The current debate on revitalization and restructuring hinges on whether the United Nations should become more focused or more encompassing. Despite clear pronouncements for change at the level of the Assembly, the Security Council, social and economic organs and peace-keeping operations, it is evident that many Member States are neither expecting the process to result in any sweeping structural reforms nor contemplating a revision of the Charter.

Progress will therefore need to come from within, the result of a balancing act between divergent interests and political considerations. It would be unfortunate, however, if such an agreement were merely a reflection of a lowest common denominator rather than the product of genuine cooperation.

I concede that the reform of such an Organization is no easy task and requires the assistance of one and all. Last year the Mauritius delegation to the General Assembly commended the Secretary-General's efforts at reforming our Organization. I should like to reiterate our appreciation for what has been achieved so far and our support for the work currently being undertaken by the Secretary-General to revitalize the United Nations.

I remain convinced that the emerging global situation has brought the objective of restructuring the United Nations system within reach. Such reform should, in the end, cater for the aspirations of the peoples of this world and enable the Organization to respond favourably to the emerging new expectations.

The General Assembly, we believe, ought to be encouraged, by its increased membership and a general trend towards democratization, to assume a more preponderant place in the affairs of the Organization. It should strengthen its policy-making role, especially in the social and economic fields, so as to exercise greater balance with the Security Council, whose mandate is now expanding beyond the traditional delineation of threats to peace and security into such areas as human-rights violations and humanitarian assistance, through preventive diplomacy and innovative peace-keeping operations. Thus, while remaining the crucial forum for discussion, the General Assembly would increase its capacity to respond to major problems and take initiatives.

On the other hand, greater consensus among its members has enabled the Security Council to assert its authority and break new ground in authorizing the use of force under Chapter VII of the Charter - for example, in Somalia, where domestic jurisdiction would normally apply, or Yugoslavia, through preventive action. The Council has also had more frequent recourse to sanctions, using them on five occasions since 1990. The intensification of the United Nations presence has undeniably enhanced the reputation of the Organization. But it has also raised questions about the Council's composition and apprehension over its decision-making process.

The new responsibilities and importance assumed by the Council would justify, in our view, some form of enlargement to reflect the new level of membership of the United Nations. A more representative Council would earn recognition and legitimate acceptance and be able to take action quickly and effectively with the imprimatur of fairness.

The Council could, we believe, withstand changes and still retain its main executive function, while improving at the same time its coordination with other United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly.

Peace-keeping has become one of the major responsibilities of the Council. The rapid expansion of peace-keeping operations and the huge involvement of United Nations personnel in this area have boosted confidence in the Organization and given it a higher international profile. Unfortunately, peace-keeping is also becoming a heavy burden in terms of financial and human resources, which threatens to curtail the Organization's involvement in other priority areas. Peace-keeping should not be confined merely to narrow security objectives, excluding broader considerations of non-military threats to security.

The Security Council has, in fact, special responsibility in shaping the future of peace-keeping as an effective safeguard in areas of conflict, or potential conflict, in volatile domestic or regional situations where major threats to international peace reside today.

However, as the Secretary-General notes in his report on the implementation of the recommendations of his "Agenda for Peace",

> "Peace-keeping is in a state of rapid evolution as the United Nations is asked to undertake increasingly complex and dangerous tasks." *(A/47/965, para. 26)*

As the mandate of peace-keeping operations extends beyond their traditional domain into such areas as electoral assistance, humanitarian relief activities, human-rights monitoring, assistance for nation-building, border-monitoring and sanctions enforcement, clearer peace-keeping guidelines and standards, based on properly defined mandates and adequate financial support, become essential. Within the parameters of fundamental principles and their interpretation, peace-keeping operations should be designed to work. The United Nations has made good use of the lessons of concrete and painful experience.

Mauritius, for its part, would like to suggest that when carrying out the reform exercise we should not only address the issues of financial resources or expansion of the membership of the Security Council, but also look at matters of concern raised in other forums and their attendant consequences for this Organization. We should, hence, not fail to give due attention to the principles contained in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, adopted at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, especially with respect to the rejuvenation of equitable economic growth and development. We must bear clearly in mind other new and globally agreed programmes, such as the New Agenda for the Development of Africa, Agenda 21, which came out of the Rio Conference, and the recommendations of the second World Conference on Human Rights.

Any changes in the structure of the United Nations should be the product of as large a consensus as possible, in order to preserve the credibility of our Organization, and in this task we must be guided inexorably by the spirit of the United Nations Charter.

However, while we uphold this spirit, it is our opinion that serious consideration should be given to a review of the provisions of the Charter. A rereading of the Charter would enable us to look anew at its contents and allow us to propose amendments in the light of new world realities. I also urge that the Assembly insist on greater clarity in its resolutions. This will certainly facilitate action and prevent time lost discussing varying interpretations of resolutions.

No doubt, one of the most striking events since the last session of the General Assembly has been the second World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in June of this year. The Conference was an opportunity to review the evolution of the attitudes of the peoples of the world towards the upholding of the rights and dignity of man since the first World Conference on Human Rights, which was held in Tehran in 1968. The quarter of a century that separates the holding of these two Conferences has witnessed a lot of changes, notably the assertion of those States which emerged from the demise of colonization.

In Vienna, both the old and the new players in the world's human rights forums were able to put forward their concerns and aspirations. The discussions, though not always easy, had the advantage of being frank. We in Mauritius firmly believe that the end result of the Conference will be beneficial to the protection of the rights of the individual. We must see to it, however, that the provisions of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action are implemented and do not become mere additional documents in the international archives. In this context, I wish yet again to make a special appeal to this Assembly for a substantial increase in the resources of the Centre for Human Rights to enable it to attend to its responsibilities with consistency and efficiency and thus contribute more effectively to the universal upholding of human rights.

Mauritius wishes to reiterate, in the most forceful manner possible, its support for the recommendation of the second World Conference on Human Rights that this Assembly address urgently the need to establish a post of United Nations high commissioner for human rights. It is our sincere hope that a favourable decision will be reached to reflect the wishes of the peoples of the world. Such an office would play the necessary role of coordinating United Nations work on human rights and would be the focal point for upholding human rights norms.

In keeping with its stand on human rights issues, Mauritius would also like to state its support for the responsibilities assigned to the International Tribunal for the prosecution of those responsible for the serious crimes committed against humanity in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1 January 1991. We would like to congratulate all those eminent persons who have been elected to sit on this Tribunal and wish them well in their difficult task.

Indeed, we view with great concern and sadness the atrocities and untold sufferings endured by the peoples of the former Republic of Yugoslavia, particularly the children. Let the impartial conclusions of the Tribunal serve as a lesson to those who believe they can get away with such degrading actions, such disrespect for human life. The seriousness and steadfastness with which the Tribunal carries out its duty will bear witness to the fact that the world community does not remain insensitive and will not be complacent in the face of such despicable and reprehensible acts wherever and whenever they occur. Yet as this century of our so-called civilized world fades away, the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be written with the blood of thousands of innocent men, women and children.

Earlier this year the world exulted at the news that France, the United States of America and the Russian Federation had voluntarily extended their moratoriums on nuclear testing. It is heartening to observe that 1993 may yet be the year when the world will have enjoyed the longest respite from nuclear testing and its attendant consequences, despite the recent disturbing reports pointing to the possibility of a resumption of nuclear testing by certain countries. No one doubts the nuclear strength of the countries which have made the moratorium a policy and it is to their credit that they have so far not been tempted to show their might by resuming nuclear testing.

It is our sincere wish that members of the nuclear club adhere to their declared moratoriums, for the resumption of nuclear testing by any of those States would jeopardize the 1995 conference for the review and extension of the non-proliferation Treaty, and would, to our mind, inevitably undermine the current efforts aimed at global disarmament.

It would be unrealistic on our part not to recognize that, despite uncertainties and ongoing foyers of tension, the world political climate has improved considerably. As cold war rivalry faded, significant bilateral progress was made with the conclusion of the START Treaties and the subsequent agreements for reduction in the respective nuclear arsenals of the erstwhile super-Powers. These positive efforts were reinforced internationally by the decision of a number of States, including France, China and South Africa, to adhere to the non-proliferation Treaty at a crucial phase in its review process.

Such encouraging developments bode well for all small nations like ours whose safety rests upon the foundations of a reliable collective security system. The recent historic agreement between the PLO and Israel and the imminent constitution of a democratic non-racial South Africa should pave the way for rapid progress towards the denuclearization of Africa. Likewise, we note with great satisfaction the consensus emerging in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to adopt new approaches in response to the changing international situation and give fresh impetus to the process of strengthening cooperation, peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region. The increased participation in this year's session suggests that the General Assembly could accordingly consider broadening the Committee's mandate.

Success at the regional level depends largely on a global atmosphere that is conducive to disarmament. We wish therefore to reiterate, in this perspective, the importance of the current negotiations for the review of the NPT and the conclusion of a test ban which should provide non-nuclear States with firm security assurances and address the various issues of nuclear proliferation. The threat of the spreading of smaller nuclear weapons is compounded by the availability of weapons-grade nuclear material produced from plutonium and highly enriched uranium and the relative lack of proper commercial safeguards. To these dangers must be added the potential hazard of nuclear pollution and the dumping of toxic wastes.

Casting a glance at the world in general, we have reason to hope for the advent of peace in the various hitherto violence-ridden regions of our planet in a not-too-distant future. On the African continent, we note a trend towards solutions to difficult situations. In Mozambique, we salute the signing of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique between the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO, the Mozambique national resistance movement. We commend the positive contribution of the United Nations operations in Mozambique. We urge the leaders concerned to show sufficient flexibility in the current negotiations aimed at elaborating appropriate electoral laws for the country.

South Africa is another source of hope. We in Mauritius have been following very closely the evolution of discussions in the multiparty negotiating forum and are particularly appreciative of the resolution adopted unanimously by the Technical Negotiating Council on 16 August 1993, which endorses the return of Walvis Bay and the offshore islands to Namibia. We have had the opportunity to congratulate those responsible for this very positive step, which we also applaud as a confidence-building measure in that region.

We welcome the installation of the Transitional Executive Council and wish to pledge our readiness - as a country which has made, in its own modest way, its share of contributions to the democratization process across the world - to help in the preparations leading to the elections of 27 April 1994.

The capacity to dismantle apartheid, establish the basis of a new constitution by consensus, and agree on an election date within a few years is no mean achievement. However, whilst many rapid and positive changes are taking place, South Africa continues to be plagued by ceaseless violence. Time and again we have deplored the upsurge of violence which has cost the lives of several of Africa's most illustrious sons, among them the sorely missed Chris Hani. We therefore welcome wholeheartedly the proposal to establish a national peace force in South Africa, made up of representatives of all parties, which would be entrusted with the task of preventing violence in particularly volatile areas. The creation of this mechanism shows the determination and ardent desire of all in South Africa to resolve outstanding issues and to proceed as planned for violence-free elections in April of next year.

Mr. Lukabu Khabouji N'Zaji (Zaire), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In Somalia, we have been distressed by the senseless killing of members of the United Nations Forces as well as Somali civilians. The skirmishes being witnessed in Somalia have regrettably shifted world attention away from the starving millions to manhunts. Women and children dying daily for want of food have been relegated insignificantly to the backstage. Mauritius would like to call on the leaders of the various Somali factions to revert to the agreement reached in Addis Ababa and submit themselves to the peace-keeping process within the context of the recently established Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mechanism for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts. Our fervent appeal to all those bent on perpetuating the blood bath in Somalia is to heed the concerns of the international community and indeed act in the interests of the Somali people rather than in their own selfish interests.

In our Indian Ocean region, on an issue of direct concern to us, I am happy to say that meaningful dialogue on the Chagos Archipelago is taking place with the United Kingdom authorities.

While we hail the success of the United Nations in Cambodia, we cannot but decry the atrocious situation in Angola, where thousands of lives are done away with daily. The question that must be asked is this: to what end will a country depleted of its human resources serve those who, in their desperation to be at the helm of affairs, are ready to sacrifice countless lives and lay waste that very country? We exhort Mr. Savimbi and his UNITA to come to terms with reality and accept the will of the Angolan people as expressed through the ballot box.

Outside the African continent, the Middle East, which has witnessed one of the most bitter conflicts of the century, heralds a new era. There is cause for satisfaction in the knowledge that the peace process which began at the Madrid Conference in October 1991 has taken a decisive turn with Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) extending mutual and official recognition to each other. Let us hope that the plan for Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho is but a prelude to Israel's complete withdrawal from the occupied territories, a *sine qua non* for a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

As I said earlier, we have reason to rejoice at the thought of more peaceful days in various areas of the world. However, this prospect is marred by other concerns. In Fiji the long-awaited review of the Constitution has not yet taken place, with the unfortunate result that the electoral system is in stagnation. We feel that meaningful changes in the Constitution, as promised by the Fijian authorities, will restore confidence in the Fijian community and will bring about smoother relations in the country for the benefit of all. Mauritius, as a multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-ethnic society, is willing, in all humility, to share with Fijian authorities the benefits of its own experience of harmonious living and to assist, should it be so wished, in the review of the Constitution.

While there are promising developments in the world, the global economy continues to evoke distress. The long-awaited economic recovery in developed countries continues to be inconsistent and uneven; global economic stability remains more elusive than ever. Economic growth and development proper are the only durable, effective and equitable solution to instability and to a host of other associated problems facing the world. We believe, therefore, that it is the concern of the entire world to ponder seriously a new form of multilateralism which would ensure systematic coordination of policies involving all groups of countries.

We believe that the rapid internationalization of the world economy points to the urgency to resume North-South dialogue constructively and in a spirit of cooperation and understanding. This dialogue should become an instrument for the promotion of economic growth in developing countries and should address world economic problems practically, instead of remaining a mere slogan interspersed now and again by half-measures aimed more at placating genuine concerns of the South than at evolving a workable long-term policy to bridge the ever-widening gap between the North and the South with immediate, medium-term and long-term solutions to the exasperating problems that plague most developing countries.

The efforts of most developing economies are compromised by the consequences of unbridled protectionism, deteriorating commodity prices, acute debt problems, declining financial flows, poverty and unfavourable terms for the transfer of technology. However, in the face of the unfair competition that continues to hold sway on the international trade scene, we should ensure, for example, that the provisions of the Lomé Convention that binds the European Economic Community with the Asian, Caribbean and Pacific group of countries are upheld in any multilateral trade negotiations.

We in Mauritius are eager for a balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round and have therefore been extremely disappointed at the scant attention paid to the interests of the developing countries which are vulnerable to shifts in the world economic order. The ongoing negotiations have turned out to be primarily a battle of wits and nerves among the developed countries. We have studied the latest proposals from Geneva with attention, and our frank reaction is one of consternation and dismay.

What is proposed is a cataclysmic operation which calls for the system to be completely refounded, the structures that exist to be razed, and the groupings within which we conduct our foreign trade to be dismantled. What is suggested by the major negotiators is a change so convulsive that only the most resilient economies will emerge unscathed.

Mauritius considers this situation to be most unfair, unjust and, above all, counter-productive, in the long run. Mauritius, which has an open economy banking on export-led growth, is in favour of free trade and liberalization of exchanges with due regard for the acquired rights of various groups of developing countries. We believe, however, that such change must come about through an orderly, evolutionary process that will give ample time for adaptation, rather than through external imposition which has little consideration for factors other than economic. We therefore appeal to all contracting parties to strive earnestly for a conclusion of the Uruguay Round that will take into account the difficulties of the developing countries and the particular situation of small island States.

Both the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the General Assembly have recognized the specificities of small island States and the attention that should be given to them in view of the special case they constitute in the interrelation of environment and development. These States are characterized by their limited size in relation to the length of their coastline, limited natural resources, relative geographical isolation, extremely fragile and vulnerable ecosystem and a vast expanse of seas forming part of their territorial limits. For small island nations the ocean and the coastal environment are hence of primary importance and constitute a basic development resource.

The record of the United Nations in the social and economic fields is a mixed one. Its contribution to global awareness and respect for human rights and democratic values is undisputed. The Rio and Vienna Conferences were landmarks of global cooperation, despite divergent perceptions on the strengthening of relevant institutions and adoption of concrete measures.

Such cooperation could in our view be developed by maintaining a strong role for the Commission on Sustainable Development and by choosing a feasible and incremental approach to implementing the commitments made by Governments under Agenda 21. In this regard, we look forward to the fruitful preparations for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and its successful outcome in Barbados next year, as the first test case in the ongoing Rio process. We also feel that the General Assembly should seriously consider establishing an intersessional mechanism to complete the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.

We, for our part, are as committed as any of those who have made the protection of the global environment their *leitmotif*. We have ratified the Climate Change Convention, the Biodiversity Convention, the Montreal Protocol and the Basel and the Bamako Conventions, among other instruments. Our concern is to safeguard the world and ensure the well-being of those who live in it.

(spoke in French)

Let me pursue my thoughts on participation by small States in international life by calling attention to the fact that in a few weeks Mauritius will have the honour to host the fifth Summit of French-speaking Countries and by saying a few words about the two principal themes that will be addressed by Heads of State or Government of countries that share the use of the French language: human rights and development; and unity in diversity.

Those timely questions illustrate our concerns at a time when the world is undergoing profound change and when most of our countries continue to face challenges of development. My country wants to make its own contribution, however modest, to the thought of the French-speaking world and the rest of the international community so that mankind may see - based on the example of Mauritius - that peaceful coexistence in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic culture is no mere Utopian idea.

I wish to thank the Secretary-General, a great friend of the French-speaking world, for having agreed, despite his weighty responsibilities, to honour us with his presence at a Summit that will bring together, at the highest level, delegations from 47 countries and from all continents.

(spoke in English)

As members will appreciate, we small States are nevertheless doing our best to make our share of contributions in order to bequeath to future generations an environmentally clean world, a world free of want, a world free of war, a world where peace and harmony will prevail. Can we expect the same from those with mightier resources?

Mr. ÇETIN (Turkey): At the outset, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Insanally on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. The fact that he was selected to guide our deliberations signifies the confidence that Member States have in his well-known professional qualities. I am sure that, under his guidance, the present session of the Assembly will tackle the issues on its agenda with courage and realism.

I would also like to place on record our appreciation for the competence and wisdom of his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev, and for his outstanding performance in steering the work of the General Assembly during an eventful year.

My delegation takes joyful pride in welcoming Andorra, the Czech Republic, Eritrea, Macedonia, Monaco and the Slovak Republic to the family of nations. We believe that their admission represents yet another milestone in further consolidating the universality of this Organization. There is no doubt that our community will be enriched and strengthened by their contribution to the realization of the ideals of the United Nations.

The excitement and hopefulness of 1989 already seem to be part of a distant past. We both welcomed and were unprepared for the events that marked the dramatic end of the cold war. They generated a tidal wave of optimism about the future of international relations. Fervent talk about a rapidly changing world was the order of the day when we entered the present decade. Little was done, however, to determine and shape the dynamics and scope of the change. It was more or less taken for granted that this change would turn out to be for the better. That did not prove to be the case. Accordingly, the creation of a new, desirable international system continues to top the political agenda as the most challenging task of our times.

The past 12 months have demonstrated yet again that the new world in the making might at times be as dangerous as the old, if not worse in certain respects. Nevertheless, we should resist the impulse to indulge in a dark pessimism for which there can be no legitimate cause. The crucial phase of history we are going through calls for reflection and positive action, not a defeatist mood. The international community should not stand by in desperation and watch conditions deteriorate. It must display the will to redirect the course of history towards our expectations. There definitely exists a political space for constructive initiatives and a basis for cooperative action to that end.

It is the United Nations which defines and guards that political space. Indeed, the United Nations is the foremost symbol of modern internationalism. In these turbulent post-cold-war years, hardly a day passes without the Organization being called upon to take the lead on some important task. These tasks include missions for preserving or restoring peace and security, the upholding of the rule of law, and missions to ensure the survival of mankind, to help save the environment, to combat social scourges and to rescue the so-called failing societies.

Since the cold war drew to a close and the conflicts of the transition era rose to the fore, United Nations peace-keeping operations have undergone considerable expansion in terms of their functions, size, geographical area and degree of complexity. This process has occurred in tandem with the rapid evolution of the international landscape. The same background conditions have prompted the emergence of preventive diplomacy, peace-enforcement and peace-building as new concepts awaiting urgent translation into practical and mutually supportive instruments at the disposal of the international community. Turkey's response to this urgency is reflected in our contribution to peace-keeping operations

As highlighted in the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277), effectively managing of the crises currently confronting us and responding adequately to the challenges ahead call for the elaboration of a shared vision for the future of our Organization.

In this connection, the focus of priority attention should be the Security Council. Today, the prestige and credibility of the United Nations depend more than ever on the effectiveness of that principal body. There is a widespread call for the Security Council to become more responsive to the needs of the current international scene. This can be made possible only by making the Council more representative of the new geopolitical realities. In other words, the post-cold-war environment requires a fresh approach towards the Council's renovation and restructuring. Hence, the discussion on the twin themes of equitable representation and membership enlargement is very timely.

Turkey firmly believes that enlarging the Security Council membership would enhance its effectiveness. Enlargement should not be conceived of only as an increase in the number of members, but should also envisage the creation of a new category of seats to be held by States that could be qualified as semi-permanent members. Semi-permanent membership in the Council could rotate among a specific number of States designated according to certain objective criteria: population; geopolitical posture; economic potential; record of contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security; and equitable geographical distribution. Since Turkey fully meets these criteria, it considers itself qualified as a candidate for that new category of membership.

A Security Council more responsive, representative, transparent and accountable is a requirement inherent in the spirit of Article 24 of the Charter. Hence, the democratization of its structure would ensure more active participation in the Council's work. The moral ground for the full implementation of the Council's resolutions would thereby be strengthened.

Few, if any, would contest the fact that it was the tragedy of Bosnia and Herzegovina that dispelled the euphoria prevalent during the earlier period of the post-cold-war era. Genocide and "ethnic cleansing" were the hallmarks of the tragedy. They were conducted with impunity. We could neither halt, nor roll back the Serbian aggression. Nor could we alleviate, in earnest the suffering of the survivors.

The example of a civic State, embracing all its citizens as equals, irrespective of their ethnic origin or religion, was given to us in Bosnia where a mature multicultural civilization had evolved over many centuries. No lament over its destruction at the hands of ethnic chauvinism could be exaggerated. Moreover, denying the Bosnians the means for their legitimate self-defence amounts to a failure in due support for democracy against tyranny. A most serious blow has been dealt to the moral essence of international law and to the contemporary principles of conduct among nations.

Any document endorsing the consequences of expansionism, genocide and "ethnic cleansing" cannot usher in real peace. No peace throughout history has been lasting when based on rewarding injustice, aggression and racism. We cannot relieve our conscience by fabricating *realpolitik* excuses for our inaction and silence. Appeasement is no policy, but partnership in wrongdoing.

The stakes in Bosnia are much higher than those related to the survival of the Bosnian State and its people. They include the validity of our hope to do away with ethnic and religious warfare in the future. The betrayal of Bosnia as a multicultural, multi-ethnic State, invalidates this hope - and with it the fundamental principles of our Organization. If we allow dictatorship and adventurism to get away with the crimes they have committed in Bosnia, the post-cold-war disorder may worsen. Continued denial of the right of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to defend itself aggravates the responsibility of the international community for what is happening there. Should Bosnia and Herzegovina disintegrate, not only the Balkans and Europe, but the whole world, will eventually suffer the bitter after-effects.

Turkey will continue to pursue actively the course of justice and legitimacy to support the brave people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in their struggle for survival and democracy.

The sinister success of Serbian expansionism in Bosnia has emboldened aggressors elsewhere. A tragedy of similar proportions is occurring in the Caucasus, where Armenians have occupied a fifth of Azerbaijani territory. Peace and stability in a sensitive region neighbouring Turkey has been seriously undermined. Security Council resolutions 822 (1993) and 853 (1993), calling for the immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of the occupation forces, are being ignored.

It should be borne in mind that short-term military opportunism is not compatible with long-term interests. Moreover, it is fraught with unpredictable dangers. Neither in the Balkans nor in the Caucasus - nor, for that matter, anywhere else - will Turkey ever accept the acquisition of territory by force. Unless such gross violations of international law are prevented and the principles of the United Nations Charter vigorously upheld, the present turmoil and confusion cannot be replaced by a just and peaceful order.

It is with these thoughts in mind that Turkey strongly endorses the observations made by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his statement on 30 August last, at the sixty-sixth session of the Institute of International Law in Milan. There he appropriately referred to ultra-nationalism and micro-nationalism as two of the greatest dangers menacing today's international society. He underlined that, by strengthening the nation State as the main subject of international law, multilateralism preserves the world community from these two great perils. His admonition that

> "Ultra-nationalism today may still be a temptation, at times, for a number of major Powers nostalgic for the period of hegemony"

is of particular relevance at this juncture of post-cold-war developments.

Indeed, the darkening shadows of ultra-nationalism and micro-nationalism, ethnic chauvinism and neo-racism have loomed like phantoms behind the scenes in the crises that have erupted during the last two years. The international community has to cure itself of these diseases. We should not let irredentist, hegemonic tendencies plague our future. The newly emerging geopolitical pluralism of Eurasia has to be kept alive with a moral commitment to the quest for global democratic interdependence.

Most of the threats to international peace in our time are bred in climates of intolerance. We have to develop a new mind-set for the recognition and acknowledgment of other peoples' right to be different. We have to enlarge our capacity for give and take.

Tolerance is the foundation of civil society. To build a just and peaceful world order, such societies must proliferate. To that end, we need to promote a culture of tolerance all over the world.

In this spirit, and as a follow-up to resolution 47/124, Turkey will submit during the current session a draft resolution proposing the proclamation of 1995 as the United Nations Year for Tolerance. Adoption of that draft resolution would help to accelerate the pace of the efforts made in the struggle against all forms of fanaticism, fundamentalism, discrimination and persecution.

Tolerance and social development are correlated concepts. Accordingly, my Government attaches great importance to concerted action at the global level aimed at solving social problems and easing the tensions they cause. Hence, we are amply satisfied that the Chilean initiative for the convening in March 1995 of a World Summit for Social Development has borne fruit. Turkey will prepare for this Summit in earnest, and looks forward to contributing to its success.

In this connection, Turkey welcomes the Secretary-General's latest report on the work of the organization, in which he courageously addresses the gravity of the situation stemming from the difficulty in raising funds for development aid experienced since the end of the cold war. He accurately observes that the poorer countries no longer hold the same interest for the rich as they did in the previous decades of ideological competition. My Government believes that activities for development are just as important as peace-keeping operations. Indeed, it is those activities, including their humanitarian assistance dimension, which provide the foundations for global peace and security. Turkey, stretching its budgetary means to the utmost, continues to be increasingly active as a donor and contributor in the fields of economic and humanitarian support and solidarity.

Since the beginning of 1992 we have implemented an economic assistance package amounting to $2,893 million. The package includes technical assistance, project financing, training grants and soft loans, made available to 32 countries in four continents. We are firmly committed to continuing our efforts in this domain. To increase efficiency in terms of coordination, we have set up the Turkish International Cooperation Agency.

Over the same period 28 countries in three continents, stricken by natural and/or man-made disasters, have received humanitarian aid worth a total of $213 million from Turkey, in cash or in kind, as well as various forms of relief and accommodation for refugees.

Offering as they do a gloomy general picture, the past 12 months are nevertheless not totally bereft of reasons for optimism, which include: the processes culminating in the restoration of democracy in Haiti and Cambodia; the positive developments leading towards the building of a democratic, united, free and non-racial South Africa; and the peaceful evolution of Eritrea to independence. A new diplomacy for democracy seems to be making headway. All of us must bring our full energies to bear on this phenomenon so that it may gain momentum. That momentum, in its turn, will give impetus to the consolidation of peace, because democracies seldom fight each other.

The only way to advance towards democracy is progressive and sustained democratization. The distance covered in this process is measured by the degree of respect for human rights and the rule of law. The convening of the World Conference on Human Rights earlier this year enabled the international community to identify clearly the indispensable common denominators needed in the building of pluralistic civil societies. The Conference re-emphasized the importance of the global task of promoting and protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and confirmed the commitment of the international community to securing the full and universal enjoyment of those rights through increased and sustained international cooperation and solidarity.

The Vienna Declaration includes a comprehensive definition of terrorism as any activity aiming at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, threatening the territorial integrity of States and destabilizing legitimately constituted Governments. We strongly endorse the call by the Conference to continue taking the necessary steps to prevent and combat terrorism.

The historic breakthrough achieved in the Middle East peace process holds the promise of concord and cooperation not only between the Palestinians, Israel and their Arab neighbours, but on a much wider regional scale. Its positive ripple effects may set in motion multi-dimensional dynamics that could transform an entire area, stretching from the Atlantic to the Gulf and from the eastern Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, into one of harmony, dialogue and co-prosperity.

As a country that neighbours the Middle East, has a record of constructive involvement in the region's affairs and good traditional ties with all the parties to this dispute, Turkey hails with the utmost satisfaction this momentous shift from enmity towards reconciliation.

The momentum so gained should be fully utilized. Irreversibility of the process is not enough; the process must advance at an accelerated pace towards the ultimate objectives defined in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

The wise, far-sighted and courageous architects who designed this blueprint for rebuilding amity and peace in the Middle East may, as ever, rest assured of Turkey's firm support for and contribution to their mission. We are committed to assisting their endeavours in every way.

Three years after the outbreak of the Gulf crisis the people of Iraq are still subjected to hardship. This regrettable situation results from the Baghdad Government's reluctance to comply fully with the requirements of the Security Council resolutions relating to the Gulf War settlement. Compliance would tangibly demonstrate Iraq's interest in resuming its place in the international community.

However, we cannot remain indifferent to the suffering of the people of Iraq. My Government firmly believes that the international community must urgently consider imaginative ways to break this vicious circle.

Turkey has been forthcoming in providing Iraq with humanitarian assistance since 1991. By the same token, we have decided to launch a new humanitarian assistance programme worth $13.5 million aimed at the entire needy population of northern Iraq. Our approach is without prejudice to Iraq's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity.

Along with the Iraqi people, a number of countries, particularly Iraq's neighbours, are also exposed to the adverse effects of the continued economic sanctions. The international community should also devise a set of measures aimed at redressing their mounting losses.

My Government is concerned over the worsening situation in Jammu and Kashmir. We wish to see the dispute between Pakistan and India over the Kashmir issue resolved through the resumption of sustained dialogue. To that end, Turkey will continue to support Pakistan's endeavours in pursuit of a negotiated settlement of this long-standing problem.

As to Cyprus, it is certainly not my intention to indulge in a consideration of the past. I am quite aware that this is not the time, not would it be profitable, to enter into recriminations over history. What is important is to understand the issue correctly while acknowledging the facts underlying the present problems and the profound mistrust between the two communities. We must take careful account of those problems and the present difficulties, but we must build for the future.

Today the Cyprus question has reached a stage where the common desire and purpose of the international community is to promote an early and comprehensive solution. To that end, the Secretary-General continues his mission of good offices. As ever, Turkey supports the Secretary-General's efforts aimed at bringing about a freely negotiated, just and viable settlement. No doubt the realization of that objective requires a display of goodwill, understanding and patience by both negotiating partners in the island. Moreover, it also calls for a carefully balanced and determined approach in order to heal the profound mistrust driving the parties apart. It is with such considerations that Turkey has endorsed the concept of confidence-building measures, the scope and contents of which must be acceptable to both communities.

Whatever the reasons that may still divide the two sides, the negotiating process must continue. It is high time for all concerned to display realism and act with vision in search of a negotiated, durable solution.

At present a campaign is under way for early general elections in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. We earnestly hope that once the elections are over the Turkish Cypriot side will again be able to continue to play its constructive role in the negotiating process.

Turkey lies at the very epicentre of several regions making up the most turbulent part of the Northern hemisphere. We are actively engaged in the post-cold-war search for new approaches to build peace through multilateral action. Our objective is to reinforce the international security system. Only the United Nations can provide legitimacy to regional arrangements and institutions should the latter decide to act in the fields of militarily backed preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace enforcement.

All three of those categories of action are in demand on Turkey's periphery. My Government deploys all of its available assets to help defuse and resolve these crises. We strive to create and consolidate interlinked areas of solidarity and processes of cooperation.

In that effort we proceed from two basic tenets. First, we believe that the evolution of the international environment towards a better future is not only desirable but, in certain conditions, also possible. Secondly, we are of the opinion that such a future may materialize only through the reinforcement of respect for the rule of law along with the universal observance and implementation of the principles of democracy and tolerance.

The United Nations was created to preserve peace. However, it cannot be expected to help resolve the collective security problems of our times unless its Member States are willing and prepared to assume their responsibilities as upholders and enforcers of the United Nations Charter and the contemporary norms of international behaviour.

With the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Organization to be celebrated in two years' time, all of us here must admit that the main objective defined in the Charter, namely, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," has not yet been achieved. In the strengthening of peace and security our immediate task is fully to mobilize the potential of the United Nations for resolving regional and local conflicts, which have proliferated since the end of the cold war.

For the future well-being of all nations, it is high time to act with the vision and forbearance that peace requires. Turkey stands committed to continue making its own contribution to attaining that objective.

Mrs. BONGO (Gabon) *(interpretation from French):* I should like first to take this opportunity to extend to the delegation of India the sincerest condolences of the delegation of Gabon on the earthquake that has just hit the region of Sholapur.

The present session of the General Assembly is convened at a crucial juncture in the history of international relations. A number of significant events have occurred on the world stage in the past few years.

In that context the election of Ambassador Samuel Insanally as President of the General Assembly is particularly significant. It is a tribute not only to his qualities as an enlightened diplomatic, well versed in international questions, but to the tireless work of Guyana, his country, on behalf of peace. On behalf of the delegation of Gabon, I extend to him our warmest congratulations on his election to preside over this session.

Our congratulations also go to the outgoing President, Mr. Stoyan Ganev of Bulgaria, who discharged his duties so honourably and ably.

To our Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, I repeat our firm support for his many efforts on behalf of world peace and security.

Lastly, we should like to welcome the new countries that have just joined the great family of the United Nations and to assure them of our friendship and readiness to work with them to achieve the noble purposes for the attainment of which the Organization was founded.

The end of the cold war has made it possible to establish new kinds of relations between States and to open the way to a new era of hope, peace and solidarity, promoting conflict prevention, better ways of dealing with acute problems and the settlement of many of the conflicts threatening international peace and security.

It is from that perspective that we should view the recent initiatives which the Organization and the international community have undertaken.

Gabon welcomes with great interest the most recent political developments in South Africa. We welcome the creation of a Transitional Executive Council, which will allow South Africans for the first time to take part in building a new, democratic, non-racial and united South Africa. In that spirit, we urge all other parties to accede to the agreement creating the Council and hope they will work towards its full implementation. Gabon believes that the changes taking place in South Africa will have a definite impact on the democratization process in Africa and on the continent's development. We therefore hope that the appeal made here on 24 September 1993 by President Nelson Mandela for the lifting of economic sanctions and the establishment of diplomatic relations with South Africa will be heard and acted upon.

In Somalia too many innocent victims continue to pay the heavy daily price of violence. While praising the efforts of the United Nations to bring peace and national reconciliation to the country, we believe that the time has perhaps come for the international community to give priority to the path of dialogue and negotiation.

The situation in Liberia remains a source of concern, despite the hopes raised by the signing of the Cotonou Agreement on 25 July 1993. We call on the parties concerned to begin strict implementation of that Agreement. We make a similar appeal to the parties to the conflicts in Mozambique, Rwanda and Angola.

Turning specifically to Angola, I note that the optimism prevailing after the Bicesse Peace Accords soon gave way to disappointment born of the resumption of hostilities. In that brother country, so close to my own, the perpetuation of the situation leads me to praise the tireless efforts of the United Nations and all other initiatives aimed at restoring peace and security. As in the past, Gabon will spare no efforts to help achieve a lasting settlement of that conflict.

In the Middle East the mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO, as well as the recent signing of the interim arrangements for the autonomy of Gaza and Jericho, were welcomed with relief and deep satisfaction by my country. We dare hope that this historic agreement will promote reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and the establishment of a climate of peace and cooperation in the region.

In that regard, my country supports all United Nations initiatives, particularly Security Council resolution 833 (1993), aimed at ensuring respect for the inviolability of the international boundary between Iraq and Kuwait, in accordance with the terms of the 1963 arrangements.

In South-East Asia we welcome the decisive role played by the United Nations in the restoration of peace in Cambodia. The holding of free and fair elections in May 1993, the creation of the Constituent Assembly, and the return to the throne of His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk all illustrate the United Nations commitment and the confirmed solidarity of the international community.

The tragedy unfolding in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the serious threat of the conflict's spreading to the entire subregion are a source of concern for my country. We make an urgent appeal to the parties concerned to return to the negotiating table and lay down their arms.

The Conferences recently held in Vienna and Geneva on human rights and the protection of the victims of war, respectively, were opportunities for our Organization to reaffirm its commitment to defending human rights. Gabon, which has always given these questions their due consideration, encourages all United Nations efforts to protect human rights. It would thus be appropriate to strengthen existing structures with additional human and financial resources so as to promote the efficiency sought by our Organization in this area.

Never has our Organization been called on to such a degree by the international community as in the past few years. If it is to meet all the expectations, it must adapt its main organs to the demands of the times. We welcome the ongoing reform and revitalization process and hope that it will include consideration of equitable representation in the Security Council and an increase in the number of its members.

One area which our Organization must explore further is that of preventive diplomacy, as set forth by the Secretary-General in his "An Agenda for Peace". Reflecting that trend, the Organization of African Unity has just created machinery to prevent, manage and settle conflicts. If it is to be effective, this new machinery must be integrated into the framework of global disarmament.

The progress made by last 13 January, when the chemical-weapons Convention was signed, shows the international community's determination to ban weapons of mass destruction, particularly chemical weapons, and its readiness to work for general and complete disarmament. For its part, my country is working towards that end, just as it is promoting confidence-building measures in central Africa. It was in keeping with this involvement that we hosted the third meeting of the Permanent Consultative Committee on security questions in our subregion. This meeting was notable for bringing together, for the first time, all States members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

In the course of its work the Committee stressed the advantages for all States of the subregion of ratifying international legal instruments on disarmament matters. It recommended that its Bureau play a more committed political role in seeking solutions to crises and conflicts likely to disturb the peace of a member State. It encouraged States in the subregion to pursue and strengthen the democratization process already under way, while respecting and promoting human rights.

Regarding the creation of a permanent inter-State crisis management headquarters, with a view to establishing a subregional peace-keeping force, the Committee recommended transitional measures, including the involvement of ECCAS in the field of security; a study of features and types of crises and conflicts; and the creation of a non-permanent committee of subregional staff offices. It further recommended that the United Nations be asked for assistance to carry out a study on a balanced and gradual reduction of the armed forces, equipment and military budgets of member States. Finally, the Committee adopted a draft non-aggression pact between the ECCAS member States and decided to submit it to Heads of State or Government of the subregion for signature. As representative of the host country at these important meetings, and on behalf of the States of the subregion, it is my honour and privilege to invite the General Assembly in due course to endorse the draft resolution, which will be submitted to it for consideration.

What is truly at stake for Africa is essentially the economy. It will determine to a great extent the preservation of unity, peace and security on our continent. In that regard, the marginalization of Africa in the world economy - as a result of the decline of its commodity prices, the reversal of financial resource flows from our countries to the international financial institutions, and the debt burden - has only grown during the past five years.

Already experiencing such a restrictive economic environment, how can we in my country welcome the idea of an energy tax and not deplore the threat of a boycott of our forest products by ecological groups in the industrialized countries? As to the forest, the Gabon authorities have always favoured the long-term management of our forests, through a logical policy of reforestation conforming with the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

My country stresses the need to maintain every aspect of the Rio spirit aimed at managing world problems in a global manner, and to promote the emergence of a new partnership in international economic and financial relations. Gabon considers this new approach to be a possible avenue for the development of our countries.

In this connection, we would like to congratulate the Japanese authorities on their initiative in organizing the International Conference on African Development, scheduled to be held in Tokyo in October. We hope that Conference will serve as the basis for a real and lasting partnership.

In this context, the proposal made by the President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session in his opening address that we create an agenda for development should enjoy the full support of our Organization.

In conclusion, turning to our country's development problems, I feel that I must draw the attention of the Assembly to the decisive role to be played by women. Our Organization has adopted resolutions and declarations on this subject. The political commitment has been made, but it must be associated with consistent follow-up measures to implement these provisions. This is a struggle that we must all of us become involved in.

Anxious to take into account the role of women in the political, economic, social and cultural fields, the Gabonese Government, through the Ministry responsible for the status of women, is working towards making this commitment a reality.

The sessions of the General Assembly are for Member States an excellent opportunity to seek together ways and means of attaining the noble objectives of the Charter. Is not one of its most important goals

> "To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character"?

Mrs. de St. JORRE (Seychelles) *(interpretation from French):* I too would like to extend to Ambassador Insanally the congratulations of Seychelles on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. We wish him every possible success in carrying out his duties.

Allow me also to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in seeking solutions to the many problems facing the international community.

Our session is opening on a note of hope, because it is taking place only a few days after a historic event of exceptional importance. I am referring, of course, to the signing of the peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. May that negotiation provide a lesson in those areas where misunderstanding, hatred and conflicts of interest are still bringing suffering to so many.

The dramatic events and the human tragedy that are taking place in hotbeds of tension throughout the world are a credit to no one. However, we must take note of the fact that while reaction has been passive and hesitant in some cases, it has been quick and resolute in others.

The quest for peace is nevertheless at the centre of our concerns. The considerable financial resources our Organization devotes to peace-keeping missions or missions to restore peace demonstrate this. This is undoubtedly proof of our own determination to bring to a halt these conflicts, which result in so many victims and destroy all the achievements of development.

Indeed, any lasting development necessarily implies efforts to thwart the threat of certain situations turning into open conflict.

For us island States, the seas are a source of life. Our future depends mainly on them. And for our development to be truly lasting, we must have peace on the seas.

While it is indisputable that old rivalries have subsided in the seas and oceans of the world, it nevertheless remains true that the Indian Ocean has always been coveted by all. And that is why we reiterate our request that the Indian Ocean become truly a zone of peace and cooperation to the benefit of coastal States. The concept of the Colombo Conference is perhaps something from a bygone era, but its objectives remain relevant today.

Members will find it easy to understand, therefore, why we attach such great importance to the implementation of resolution 47/59 of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly calling for the organization by the Ad Hoc Committee of a meeting that would propose new alternative approaches leading to the achievement of the goals contained in the initial Declaration, taking into account the changing international situation.

It is in this spirit that I should like to make an appeal to the countries which have not yet done so to ratify the Convention on the Law of the Sea so that we can get the necessary 60 ratifications for its entry into force. How are we to understand that such an important Convention has been endorsed by only 56 countries since 1982? Of course, we do appreciate the importance of what is at stake, but international solidarity must be our guide.

The International Olympic Committee would like to revive the ancient tradition of the Olympic truce and declare 1994 the International Year of Sports and of the Olympic Spirit, and we should support that proposal. Let us not underestimate the values of the Olympic spirit. They are rich in potential applications for managing international relations.

But no peace can be lasting while the causes of conflicts remain. These causes are selfishness, intolerance, xenophobia, discrimination and dictatorship, but also - and especially - poverty, poor management and excessive indebtedness. These are ills that generally lead to the emergence of new conflicts. Should we not attack the root cause rather than the effect?

A few years ago, financial backers made democratization one of the prerequisites for assistance to developing countries, and as a bonus to democracy, certain countries benefited from the generosity of the international community because they had pioneered that approach. Today, most of our countries have embarked on the process of democratization - with varied results, admittedly - but the desire to fit into the new order was the underlying reason for all. Nevertheless, this new process, and I would take the case of the Republic of Seychelles, which has met this challenge calmly and successfully, inevitably entailed extrabudgetary expenditures in all areas, both economic and social.

While it is true that the transition to democracy is something which is very valuable in and of itself, the establishment of new structures and the implementation of new rules have nevertheless been a source of additional costs which have placed a heavy burden on national budgets that were already fairly shaky. And almost everywhere, the implementation of this democratization process required the support of the international community. Is this not an objective reason to think about setting up a United Nations special fund to provide financial and logistical support for these reforms?

To be viable, this democratic undertaking must seek to meet all the challenges of a country. If it is to ensure the continuation of these new institutions, it must pave the way for sustainable development commensurate with the aspirations of peoples.

Thus, with the advent of the Third Republic, our country is today in a new stage of its history. For more than 18 months, within the context of a constituent commission, reforms have been undertaken that will produce a new Constitution and lead to free and democratic elections. In other words, for a year and a half national activity has been slowed, and even brought to a halt in some cases, while the fundamental economic problems remain.

The Seychelles has been the scene of another momentous event, the Fourth Indian Ocean Games, which took place last August in conditions that were judged exceptional. Reverting to what I was saying, I would note that the cost of the infrastructure for those Games made serious inroads into the national budget.

One might wonder how a small island country was able to engage in such a programme of reforms for 18 months in such circumstances. We are proud of having succeeded, but the economy must be restimulated immediately if we do not wish to lose all the social and political benefits that were achieved.

I should like now to take up the problem of the small island States, of whose fragility everyone here is aware. We are countries whose reduced size is the source of innumerable constraints on economic and social development, such as chronic deficits in trade balances and balances of payment, the high cost of social infrastructures in relation to their utilization and, especially, the excessive indebtedness caused by a lack of funds to finance investment programmes. The convergence of those factors has only exacerbated the fragility of our economies, which, generally speaking, are based on one or two sectors such as tourism and fishing.

That is the daily lot of the Seychelles and other small island States, which, with courage, perseverance and intelligence, are nevertheless attempting to find solutions that will enable them to promote the economic and social well-being of their peoples. Thus we believe that it is quite fitting to draw the international community's attention once again to the need to establish specific programmes and mechanisms that would make it possible for our island countries to move towards sustainable development. We ask that the same facilities that are made available to the least developed, landlocked countries be made available to us.

In any event, per capita income, always put forward as a criterion for level of development, cannot be relevant for small island States because it is distorted by the small size of their populations. Has any thought been given to the per capita cost of infrastructures or the per capita debt? We believe that such an analysis would result in the reconsideration of many decisions.

Of course, it is up to us, first of all, to take every measure to ensure the sustainability of our development by preserving, in so far as possible, our environment, which lies at the basis of all our export products. Despite all these constraints, we have been able - thanks to the judiciousness of our choices and our economic decisions - to achieve tangible results. But the international community's support, which we had been promised in Rio, did not materialize.

Today, all of the developing countries are in a precarious situation. They are confronted with many challenges: the poverty of millions of human beings, high rates of infant mortality, famine, the destruction of the environment and fratricidal wars. But these challenges are not insurmountable. What is required is courage and international solidarity.

It is more than ever the duty of the United Nations once again to draw the attention of the developed countries to the effects which the continuation of such a situation might have on our economies and our cultures - in a word, on our future, but also on theirs.

We would like concrete action, because we do not wish to have to deplore again the inertia of speeches or declarations of intent. While new conflicts arise, the old ones persist almost everywhere and the scope of the disasters is tremendous. Hence, we must react quickly, because many peoples have suffered far too much from the horrors of war.

Above all, the major Powers, the guarantors of the security and regulation of the world economic situation, must give the United Nations the means to carry out its policies.

Finally, we sincerely hope that the current session will generate the necessary impetus to resolve all our concerns, so that peace, at last restored, can create a climate conducive to development.

The meeting rose at 8.20 p.m.

United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records

12th
PLENARY MEETING

Friday, 1 October 1993
at 10 a.m.

NEW YORK

President: INSANALLY
(Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

ADDRESS BY MR. CHEDDI B. JAGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

Mr. Cheddi B. Jagan, President of the Republic of Guyana, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the distinct honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Dr. Cheddi Jagan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President JAGAN: As I stand today at this rostrum, a flood of memories rushes to my mind. I recall appearing as Premier before the United Nations Committee on decolonization in 1961 to plead the case of my country's independence. Like so many other colonies after the Second World War, Guyana was anxious to secure its freedom and exercise its right to self-determination.

The road, however, was far from easy. Along the way there were many stumbling-blocks and casualties. It was not until 1966, long after most subject peoples had been set free, that we became independent and took our place in the family of nations.

The world today is radically different from what it was then. The total membership of the United Nations has grown significantly. The cold war, which had bedevilled international relations since 1947, has ended, with a promise of a new and more democratic world order. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, one of the two super-Powers, there are severe difficulties for the new structures which have been established. Nevertheless, hope is alive for the construction of an era of peace, based on respect for all peoples and the promotion of their general welfare. It is an exciting moment in world history, and for the United Nations there is a defining role.

Guyana has been honoured by the unanimous election of its representative to the presidency of this forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. This session will undoubtedly be a challenging one. I wish to thank the entire membership for its vote of confidence in our ability to undertake this lofty responsibility. It is, after all, an acknowledgement that all States, irrespective of their size, can play an important role in the Organization's work. I am especially grateful to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) group and the wider Latin American and Caribbean Group for their full endorsement of our candidacy. I must also pay a tribute to His Excellency Mr. Stoyan Ganev for his capable direction of the forty-seventh session and to our distinguished Secretary-General for his efforts to promote the continuing success of our world Organization.

Success in these volatile times is often tempered. For, notwithstanding its important accomplishments, the United Nations cannot be said to have fulfilled the highest aspirations of its creators. The scourge of war is still rampant in many places. Colonialism is certainly not extinct, and today it threatens to survive in different forms. Many aspects of colonialism are evident in the

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ever-widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and the dependence of impoverished millions on the largesse of a few. This prevailing economic and social disparity provides a breeding ground for hunger, disease and poverty and ultimately constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

As the focal point of multilateralism, the United Nations must continue to explore the full limits of international cooperation in order to eliminate, or at least alleviate, the problems of the disadvantaged. I should like to think that there is now agreement that the grave situation requires collective action. Whatever its limitations, it is still the best forum available to States for diplomacy, dialogue and negotiation, and thus for the avoidance of conflict. We should seek, therefore, to enhance its ability to address our common goals.

As a small developing State, Guyana is fully committed to the ethos of multilateral cooperation which is embodied in the United Nations. We have come here to renew publicly our faith in the Organization and to urge all Members to pledge to deepen and strengthen multilateralism as a foundation for inter-State relations. Experience has shown that no nation, however powerful, can exist in isolation. Its borders are not impervious to encroachment by universal ills. Ultimately, it must come together with the rest of the world to find common solutions to common problems. AIDS, narcotic drugs, poverty and pollution are striking examples of the pandemic which affects us all. Control of these scourges requires concerted action by the United Nations as a whole. Added to these are natural disasters, such as the recent earthquake in India. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the Indian people and Government.

We note with some disappointment that international conflicts continue to undermine the capacity of the Organization to promote the cooperation which is deemed essential for reaching solutions to current global problems.

The real value of the United Nations in this period will depend on its collective ability to respond effectively to this wave of international conflicts, and to find acceptable means of peace-keeping and peacemaking which will not be a burden on its membership.

Such a development will inspire confidence among member nations to refer issues to the United Nations body, and to restore their reliance on the Organization's ability to resolve disputes before they resort to the battlefield.

Our first effort at constructing a framework for international peace and security through the League of Nations ended in failure. The reason can be found in the inherent weakness of the League, in the resultant inability to contain rampant nationalism, particularism and insularity and in the lack of respect for its fundamental principles. The United Nations is a second experiment, prompted by the disasters consequent upon the failure of the League. At San Francisco we vowed to spare succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We have before us today another opportunity to secure an era of real peace and stability, to deploy fully the resources of the Organization in the service of humanity, and to reach for a broad-based, sustainable development and some measure of prosperity and fulfilment for the peoples of this planet.

In our efforts to bolster international peace and security, the report, "An Agenda for Peace", which was prepared by the Secretary-General in response to the Security Council's request, sets out a number of proposals which merit serious consideration. While recognizing the need to provide the Council with enforcement capacity under Chapter VII of the Charter, we place special importance on preventive diplomacy, which would obviate recourse to physical intervention. As the experience of some recent peacemaking and peace-keeping operations has shown, these measures are fraught with uncertain political consequences. Moreover, they have proved extremely costly, particularly to small States such as ours which can ill afford such expenditures.

So diverse are the origins of conflict that each situation must be examined in depth to determine the most appropriate means of peaceful solution. In some cases the dispute may have legal implications and may therefore be best handled by a suitable judicial body. More often than not, however, the roots of conflict are embedded in a history of complicated political, economic and social factors. In such instances the ground must be carefully prepared for the cultivation of peace and stability. Fortunately, the advantages of the diplomatic approach are not lost in the United Nations, which increasingly is using the good offices of the Secretary-General and his representatives to induce solutions to long-standing conflicts.

We believe that these examples reaffirm the virtue of dialogue and negotiation. However, although promising for the future, other situations remain tenuous and require constant monitoring. Somalia and Sudan must be carefully nurtured back to normalcy. In Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina stands out as an horrific example of man's inhumanity to man, and compels us to search for a quick end to the wanton killing of innocent thousands. Indeed, the United Nations must hasten to devise new strategies to deal with these persistent convulsions in the global body politic.

The Middle East has been embroiled in conflict for much too long. With the recent signing of the declaration of principles for Palestinian self-rule, the road ahead is encouraging. Peace and stability throughout the region now seem to be within our grasp. We hope also that the territorial problems between Iraq and Kuwait can be amicably settled.

As far as South Africa is concerned, the announcement of a date for elections, coupled with supporting structures, gives rise to the hope that majority rule is not far off and we may in the near future welcome that country back into the fold of the international community. We urge the peoples of South Africa to eschew further violence and to come together for their common good.

I wish to record with satisfaction the view that a return to democratic traditions and respect for good governance and human rights has helped to further promote peace. Guyana will support any confidence-building mechanism which favours dialogue over confrontation as the means of choice for the pacific settlement of disputes. Because of the inherent correlation between peace and development it behoves each member of the international community to continue the search, where needed, for creative ways to settle disputes that could otherwise imperil not only international peace and security but also national development.

In this hemisphere, of which Guyana forms part, we are concerned that, despite the end of the cold war, Cuba remains outside the inter-American family. We truly believe that this is a serious anomaly in the context of the Organization's efforts to build a new world order based on mutual understanding and respect among all States in a united international community. We appeal to the United States and Cuba to demonstrate their good will and seek urgently to reconcile their long-standing differences. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which has a vested interest in the early *rapprochement* between these two major partners, stands ready to play a role in this process.

We are particularly pleased that the Central American region, which for far too long has been entrapped by anachronistic economic and social structures, has emerged from a vicious cycle of internecine violence. CARICOM welcomes the opportunity which this development offers for closer cooperation between two neighbouring regions. We are equally pleased that, after being held hostage by a military dictatorship unwilling to heed the popular will, Haiti is once again free to pursue a democratic path. We offer to President Aristide and his government our ready cooperation in the urgent task of reconstruction for social progress.

Guyana has itself only recently emerged from a difficult electoral process that, under international vigilance, proved to be free and fair. We are particularly grateful for the role the United Nations played in ensuring that the democratic will of our people was fully respected. After all, the right to choose one's government is a fundamental human right, which should never be denied. We commend the United Nations for providing electoral assistance at the request of those who seek it, and with due respect for the principle of national sovereignty. Elections alone, however, do not guarantee the preservation of democracy: they must be accompanied by the establishment of machinery that protects every individual in our societies. I am pleased to report that one of the first steps my Government took upon assuming office was to accede to the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Human Rights Covenants. We followed that with the establishment of an Inter-Agency High-Level Committee on Human Rights, whose function it is to ensure that Guyana complies with its reporting responsibilities under the Human Rights Conventions.

It is not enough, however, to satisfy the civic and political rights of our citizens: their fundamental economic and social entitlements to food, clothing, shelter and so on must also be provided. Human rights are indivisible, and to prefer one above the other is to deny their essential interrelatedness. The Vienna Conference appears to have recognized this fact and to have confirmed the need for a holistic approach. My own Government is dedicated to the proposition that human development must be comprehensive if our society's welfare is to be secured. Our stated policy, therefore, is to create an environment in which democracy will work to fulfil our people's spiritual and material needs. To implement our development programme, however, we shall require the cooperation of the international community to supplement our own limited resources.

As I observed earlier this year at a Conference entitled "Poverty in Guyana - Finding Solutions", we are in a situation of crisis. For, while we have recently begun to experience high growth rates, the economy continues to be weak: unemployment is high; human and financial resources are scarce; and basic infrastructure has deteriorated, leaving the social sectors vulnerable to all the ills of poverty. We have been somewhat successful in raising production and productivity levels, but are seriously limited by a heavy debt burden. Some 90 cents of each dollar earned now go towards the repayment of the national debt. And the proportion of our external commercial earnings for payment of our foreign debt is nearly three times the average of the 47 least developed countries - an unbearably heavy burden. Even though we attempt to manage expenditure judiciously, through good governance - efficient management, a clean and lean administration and fullest respect for human rights - we cannot perform miracles. At the end of the day, we must look for assistance to buttress our domestic efforts and to preserve our tender democracy. With nearly 80 per cent of our people below the poverty line, we shall succeed in consolidating democracy only through economic development with social justice.

At the present time, however, the prospects for such support appear rather bleak. There has been a noticeable contraction in development aid as the economies of some donor countries experience difficulties. Their own electorates appear increasingly concerned with domestic problems, such as unemployment and falling living standards. Whatever limited resources are available are allocated by the developed nations largely on the basis of strategic concerns. The international agenda is therefore being set more and more at the sacrifice of the developing world. There is consequently an urgent need to reorder our priorities and to place development at the top of our agenda.

At best, however, development aid is no more than a palliative. Significant economic and social progress will come to the developing countries only when inequitable and unjust economic and trade practices in the global system are removed. As the 1992 human development report pointed out, we are denied some $500 billion in market opportunities annually, 10 times what we receive as foreign assistance, primarily because of protectionist policies still being pursued by the developed countries. We call, therefore, on those countries to open up their markets to our goods at prices that compensate us fairly for our labour and production. In this context, we urge the industrial nations to expedite the conclusion of trade negotiations, taking fully into account the interests of our small, developing economies. We would also wish and ask that the formation of large regional economic groupings - the megablocs as they are called - guard against the further marginalization of our economies and our countries.

Additionally, a definite solution must be found, during the current decade, to the third world's crushing external debt problem. In Latin America and the Caribbean, with 181 million out of 441 million people living below the poverty line, in the mire of destitution, how can human development take place when, despite onerous debt payments, the stock of debt continues to grow? A prospective Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) study for the region over the 1985-1995 period shows a serious aggravation in terms of poverty, unemployment and foreign debt during the decade. Between 1981 and 1990, the region's foreign debt payments were $503 billion, of which $313 billion were interest payments. However, in the same period, the region's consolidated foreign debt increased from $297 billion in 1981 to $428 billion in 1991. Little wonder that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) publication entitled "Children of the Americas" commented that this mechanism, whereby the more you pay the more you owe, is perverse and must be stopped.

Debt relief in the form of debt cancellation, grants, soft loans and rescheduling is urgent if the developing countries are to eradicate poverty, protect the environment and play a meaningful role in expanding world trade and ending stagnation and recession in the industrially - developed countries. Debt relief must be seen as an investment not only in the development of poor countries but also in the security of the rich nations.

Recognizing the link that exists between poverty, trade, population, development and the environment, we must hasten to implement the Rio programme of action outlined in Agenda 21. The developing countries urgently require the resources - both financial and technological - necessary to fulfil their obligations under that compact. As proof of its commitment to protect the environment, Guyana has set aside nearly 1 million acres of its tropical forests for research, management and development of our rich biodiversity. With the welcome of entities such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility, the Iwokrama project, as it is now known, has been fully launched. At the commissioning ceremony held on World Environment Day this year, I dedicated the enterprise to our indigenous peoples, who are not only the principal inhabitants but also the custodians of our forests. It is fitting, especially in this, the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, that full recognition be given to the important role they play in harmonizing man's relationship with the Earth on which he lives.

We also urge full support for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, scheduled to commence in Barbados in April 1994. We trust that there will be adequate preparation and the widest participation in that Conference.

In a spirit of genuine cooperation, therefore, let us proceed to address the proposed agenda for development, which we have accepted as a natural concomitant to "An Agenda for Peace". Indeed, peace cannot prevail in the absence of development. Our attempts at peacemaking and conflict resolution in general will not succeed if inequitable and unjust economic and social conditions are allowed to persist. Of late, many of the organs and agencies engaged in the development process have had cause to lament the growing diminution of resources available to them, a problem now aggravated by continuing diversion of funding to a multiplicity of peace-keeping operations. Obviously, one recognizes the importance of maintaining global peace. However, it should not be at the cost of a disproportionate sacrifice of development, which leads to peace-keeping becoming an end in itself instead of a means of encouraging economic and social welfare.

The United Nations, whose universal membership encompasses both developed and developing nations, remains the ideal forum for forging a consensus on the major issues of peace and development. It is evident, however, that, as currently conceived and structured, it cannot adequately perform the role expected of it. That realization has led us to undertake the exercise of reforming and restructuring the Organization. To this end, we must ensure that the changes we make are not simply cosmetic but serve effectively to enhance the Organization's capacity to deal with the challenges of the post-cold-war period. Our reforms must therefore seek to establish the United Nations as the principal forum in which macro-political, economic and social policies are collectively and consensually devised.

If truth be told, the United Nations is still largely perceived, notwithstanding its recent successes in the political field, as a "talk shop". Like the old Congress of Vienna, which was described as a "perpetual dance", it is viewed in the eyes of our peoples - particularly the poor and the suffering - as an endless round of dilatory debate which produces fine resolutions but precious little by way of concrete action. To survive and succeed, therefore, the United Nations must become relevant to the lives of men, women and children everywhere.

Urgent action is required at this explosive period of mounting external debt, falling economic growth, falling third-world commodity prices, increasing unemployment, environmental destruction, underdevelopment and the persistence of poverty. Our troubled planet calls for statesmanship, political will and cooperation for meaningful change. Market forces alone are not providing the people with adequate opportunities to participate in and benefit from economic growth and development. We have a paradox of growing poverty in the midst of potential plenty. Science and technology have the capacity to eradicate poverty in the not too distant future and to halve it by the end of the century. Instead, we have today, both in the developed and in the developing countries, only about half the growth rate of a decade ago and the catastrophic phenomenon of "jobless growth" - fewer and fewer jobs and more and more poverty and inequality.

It is necessary to ascertain the root causes of global poverty and to develop an integrated strategy for its eradication. This necessitates a comprehensive world view and a recognition of the major contradiction of our time: the tremendous growth of the means of production and the anachronistic relations of production and the collective will to resolve this contradiction.

In the intense competition in a shrinking global market - owing in large part to the increasing poverty and the widening gap between the rich and poor in both the North and South, and between the North and the South - the three centres of the industrialized world - North America, Western Europe and Japan - are resorting to even more capital-intensive growth and the use of more and more sophisticated technology: computers and robots, cybernetics and automation. How can the poor and unsophisticated in the third-world countries survive in the "global village", in the "borderless world" when collectively these countries have not attained the target projected long ago of 25 per cent in the production of industrialized goods and with the great majority light-years behind in human-resource development and burdened by the dead weight of unconscionable and immoral debt payments? The rapid advance to robots and automation in the North also poses a threat to the advantageous position of competitive wage rates in many countries of the South. And the industrialized countries with budget deficits, growing numbers of jobless and retirees and inadequate welfare funds cannot afford the Keynesian luxury of pump-priming and "workfare".

In a situation of confusion and uncertainty, and with no solution in sight, the reactionary ultra-rightists and neo-fascists are getting stronger politically and becoming more vocal and strident. There is no answer to the hopelessness and despair of the more than 30 million unemployed in the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Despair is leading to alcoholism, narcotics use, crime and suicide. Meanwhile nationalism, xenophobia and neo-fascism are on the rise, leading to racial and ethnic tensions and growing civil strife.

The North-South dialogue has been languishing and has become a dialogue of the deaf. In the South, rising unemployment and abject poverty are interacting with rapid population growth, urbanization, overcrowding, disease, the production and use of narcotic drugs, increased flows of refugees across international frontiers and irreversible damage to the environment. Whereas it was said previously that the Berlin Wall prevented peoples in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe from travelling to the West, now new walls are being erected to prevent people from entering the developed, industrialized countries.

It is not enough to treat the symptoms of the global malaise. Radical reforms are urgently needed. Structural adjustment is as necessary for the developed countries as for the developing countries, but reforms must be predicated on social justice and have a human face. Human needs and human security should be the object of development. In this regard, greater emphasis must be placed on human capital and natural capital, and much more must be done to speed up disarmament so that the despairing and hungry of the world can benefit from greatly enhanced savings.

The development agenda must include a critical analysis of possible options and must deal with the international competitiveness of the third world, the basis of new modalities of international cooperation for development and the financing of development. It must also address core problems: alleviation of poverty, expansion of productive employment and enhancement of social integration, particularly of the more disadvantaged and marginal groups.

To attain these objectives, the people - I repeat, the people - must play a central role. They must be fully involved in all aspects of life to take advantage of their initiatives and creativity in the fashioning of a better future and a peaceful and prosperous world.

As the leader of a small nation which continues to believe in the vast potential of this Organization for making the world a better place in which to live, I appeal to the Assembly to devote itself to this urgent task. Let us work together to advance the cause of global peace and development.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Cheddi B. Jagan, President of the Republic of Guyana, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

ADDRESS BY MR. ALBERTO FUJIMORI, CONSTITUTIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru.

Mr. Alberto Fujimori, Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: (interpretation from Spanish): On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, His Excellency Mr. Alberto Fujimori, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President FUJIMORI *(interpretation from Spanish)*: In 1990 the Peruvian people - heirs to an ancient culture, who, like other peoples of the third world, suffered the consequences of colonialism and later various frustrations caused by our history - began to ask themselves more and more why they had not reached a truly dignified level of existence comparable to that of the developed countries.

Why was it that a rich nation, known for its hard-working population and enjoying apparent democracy, should have to suffer from hyperinflation, isolation from the international financial community, terrorism, drug-trafficking, corruption and internal and external debt? In short, why was it ungovernable?

The so-called traditional democracy, which solved none of Peru's serious problems, had been nothing more than a struggle between privileged minorities, the elite and party leaders who took turns in power while the country sank deeper and deeper into misery.

Nations, however, do not disintegrate in such crises; rather, they are roused to carry out moral and material reconstruction. Such has been the case in Peru.

I ask myself, and I ask all those present, the representatives of all the nations of the world, "Which is the first priority: the narrow, blind defence of an institutional formality that is now worthless and obsolete, or a better destiny for millions of human beings?"

We in Peru have experienced this disjunction which the Government of President Boris Yeltsin in Russia is experiencing so dramatically today.

Why should we fear making corrections in the course of our history, however radical they may be? To govern is to confront problems firmly, and not to defer, much less to evade, decisions.

In exceptional circumstances, when the civilized existence and survival of a nation is at stake, each country has to find its own course and its own solutions and then reconstruct its democracy in touch with its own reality. Failing this, it will simply become ungovernable - a situation that most often leads to anarchy, which in turn inevitably generates violence.

The institutions of Peru's incipient political system proved to be among the most inefficient on the continent. That was the context within which Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement came into existence.

The model for Shining Path is Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. This is why, for 10 years, that group's activities were directed toward destroying the existing system: industries, laboratories, electrical towers, machinery, bridges, highways and public buildings, costing the country US$ 25 billion in material damages and losses. New York learned what terrorist insanity is all about with the criminal attack on the World Trade Center - an isolated case, thank goodness.

We had reached a clear and elemental disjunction: either we stopped the crisis and the terrorism which steadily nourished it, or the country would collapse completely. My responsibility was to govern, not to serve as Peru's undertaker.

Our anti-terrorist strategy has led to the reinstatement of the principle of authority throughout the country, particularly in places as dissimilar as state universities and penitentiaries.

After being captured a year ago, Abimael Guzmán made a fiery proclamation to all his followers to continue relentlessly the war against the Peruvian State and its society. Today, in a 180-degree turn, he appeals to your speaker, the President of Peru, in order to retract his previous atrocious objectives. This shows essentially that he has inevitably come to terms with the total defeat of his totalitarian project.

In fact, I recently received a revealing communication from the leader of Shining Path, Abimael Guzmán, who is in jail, in which he asked for "a peace agreement". I repeat, Abimael Guzmán Reynoso has asked the President of Peru to talk about a "peace agreement". But a "peace agreement" implies negotiation between two belligerent groups considered to be equal - equal not only militarily but also from a moral and ethical standpoint. This is inadmissible, for there can be no negotiations with a genocidal terrorist group - described as such by the United Nations itself - whose leader, having been captured, tried and sentenced last year to life imprisonment, has absolutely no power to negotiate. Moreover, there is no correlation of forces between the Peruvian State and these criminals that could put them on an equal footing. There can be no doubt that it has been completely recognized that the State, the Armed Forces, the National Police and the people of Peru are prevailing over terrorism.

The Government of Peru is fully aware of its obligation to respect the international principles of the Geneva Convention. Nevertheless, it will make no concession in any way that would jeopardize the process of restoring peace completely to Peru. Through the attainment of peace in our country and the definitive eradication of terrorism, we are also preventing the spread of terrorism to the rest of the Southern Cone of our continent.

The Peruvian Government and its people will tirelessly continue their effort to fight terrorist violence, with or without requests from the heads of these organizations. If they really wish peace to be achieved as soon as possible, they should immediately and unconditionally stop terrorist actions and their methods of propagation, as a preliminary step enabling the Peruvian State to prevent further bloodshed and suffering for the Peruvian people and to take the further steps required to facilitate the process by which the Government will fully consolidate national peace before the date I promised to my fellow citizens, that is, 1995.

Twenty-five thousand deaths; hundreds of thousands of refugee peasants displaced from their villages; thousands of widows and orphans; hundreds of handicapped and maimed, including civilian, police and military; thousands of children who have grown up in the middle of a cruel war; $25 billion of material waste; an entire country paralysed by terror and uncertainty: this is the sum of 13 fateful years, during which a State considered to be democratic appeared not to exist in the face of totalitarian terror. The end of this vicious circle is approaching after 17 months - barely 17 months - of the counter-terrorist strategy developed by my Government. Now we can talk about the State and democracy in Peru.

In our country, a new and exemplary democracy is being devised. It has some unusual elements: the common man's awareness of his chronic exclusion from the mainstream of civic life; his experience and sacrifice as a survivor of one of the century's worst economic crises; and his equally successful involvement in the war against the nation's terrorist threat - within the framework of the full exercise of his right to self-defence and the universal rights of the individual and of every citizen.

Peru can once again see the light of day. The nightmare of war is now behind us. Those who doubted that this was possible must now admit that it has happened and must recognize that the decisions taken in April 1992 were absolutely necessary. Peru is beginning to be a viable country again - an attractive country visited by thousands of tourists, who can confidently bear witness to its new look, a country with hope, one into which foreign capital is flowing, thereby generating more employment and wealth. In the near future, the Peruvian people will have the historic opportunity to decide upon a constitution incorporating the thoroughgoing reforms that will guarantee peace and progress in our country. This will be the end of a grim cycle. Peru is now a country open to the world - one which, like other countries all over the planet, is beginning fully to exercise its right to be a free and prosperous nation through the implementation of a true democracy and of a system of government that will benefit our people.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Alberto Fujimori, Constitutional President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. OCHOA ANTICH (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Allow me, on behalf of Venezuela, to extend to you, Sir, our very special congratulations on your election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. It is of great significance to us that the Permanent Representative of Guyana - a country with which we maintain special relations of friendship and cooperation - should be directing the work of this important Assembly. The President of Venezuela, Mr. Ramon J. Velásquez, would have liked to be present on this important occasion. However, the current situation in the country necessitates his remaining in Caracas.

In recent months Venezuela has had to assume exceptional responsibilities. Yesterday marked the end of our term as president of the Security Council. During that term, events of vital importance have taken place in the world. In particular, during the past 12 months we have witnessed with horror the re-emergence of hatreds, barbarism and episodes of ethnic cleansing that we thought had been consigned for ever to the saddest and blackest pages of history. In the conflict that is tearing apart the former Republic of Yugoslavia, Venezuela has played an important role - a role widely recognized by the other members of the Council - in the protection of human rights. Acting within the framework of the international bodies, we have sought, above all, to restore peace to that tormented region.

The United Nations has accumulated a wealth of experience in the deployment of operations for the maintenance of order - even in some situations in which peace had not yet been attained. With the new situation in the world, an organization that was established for purposes of dialogue and negotiation is faced with challenges of a different kind. From the maintenance of order in a traditional sense, it has moved on to operations that include military aspects, humanitarian, institutional and electoral assistance, the monitoring of human-rights issues and even development aid. In recent months the United

Nations has played an active and varied role against an ever-changing international background.

This year, too, the world has seen the emergence of new hopes. In one of the most strife-torn regions of the planet, where there appeared to be no prospect of understanding or future coexistence, two old enemies, the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, have taken significant steps towards a joint search for peace and the harmonious development of the two peoples. Venezuela welcomes the Washington agreement between Israel and the PLO, and will work within the framework of the United Nations to achieve a body of measures and resolutions that will help to erase the hatreds of a past that is still too close. Similarly, we support the peace initiatives and the process of demilitarization and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons that have always been an essential part of the work of this Assembly.

During our months on the Security Council, we have experienced, at first hand, the accelerated pace of world events today. We are concerned at the uncertainty of the roads to be taken and the instability that prevails in many corners of the world. There are no longer any ideologies, established values or clear directions. Nevertheless, amidst all the confusion a few issues have emerged which could become the single prevalent ideology of mankind. These are human rights, the defence of democracy and the protection of the environment.

Last June, in Vienna, the United Nations sponsored that remarkable encounter, the World Conference on Human Rights. We engaged there in a fruitful dialogue between Governments and non-governmental organizations, with the aim of working together to wipe out the injustices that still exist in our countries. In Vienna, we came to realize that the protection of human rights has become a topic of interest to people of different races from all parts of the world. The Conference confirmed the universal value of those rights and reaffirmed that democracy, human rights and development are equally important and mutually reinforcing objectives.

The further improvement of democracy might begin in this Organization, where the reform of the Security Council continues to be necessary in order to make its decisions more representative. The General Assembly must attach the proper importance to the discussion of this issue. Venezuela shares the general concern with making the United Nations a more transparent and democratic Organization. The new international scenario calls for a more representative Security Council without exclusive rights that discriminate against some Member States.

In the context of the defence of democracy, the United Nations and regional organizations have made outstanding efforts, especially in Haiti, where it is our hope that the lawfully constituted Government will be restored, and in Guatemala, where forces attempting a *coup d'état* were defeated by the weight of civil society. Today, democratic regimes prevail in almost all of Latin America. However, our democracies are still young and have experienced difficulties in recent months.

In Venezuela, we have overcome a severe political crisis which undoubtedly had the result of strengthening our institutions. Following a process which took place entirely within the framework of the law, Mr. Ramón J. Velásquez succeeded to the highest office. He is a distinguished historian, respected by all political forces in the country for the honesty he has shown in his career and for his profound knowledge of the Venezuelan mentality.

Democracy is a system of values within which respect for institutions is not only a duty but a necessity. There have always been attempts in Latin America to justify the use of force. Order, the fight against terrorism or communism, the inefficiency of the State: these reasons have often been used to justify regimes that, finally, did not re-establish order but abolished freedom. In the past, this has happened in Venezuela. Today, we have the serenity of waiting for our institutions to function, and we can now say with pride that democracy persists in Venezuela and that we have been able to overcome a serious political crisis.

Nevertheless, our future is clouded by economic difficulties. The defence and maintenance of democracy requires the full cooperation of the industrialized countries in the search for a form of economic development that will afford our impoverished peoples a life of dignity. Hence, we support the proposal by the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Samuel Insanally, for a summit to discuss the world's economic problems and agree on programmes of action to solve them. We agree that the "Agenda for Peace" put forward by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, should be complemented by an agenda for development which would place socio-economic problems on the same level as those of a purely political nature. The establishment and preservation of democracy involves reaching a balanced and equitable global growth rate.

Balanced growth was the central topic of the first session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in New York. The establishment of that Commission is one of the most significant outcomes of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. There is an intimate link between the issue of development, the financial resources required in order to attain it and the strict protection of the environment. Despite the lack of encouraging results, we still believe firmly in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and we wish to draw particular attention to Principles 3 and 4, which read as follows:

> Principle 3:
>
> "The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations."
>
> Principle 4:
>
> "In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it."

Accordingly, we are greatly concerned at what is happening on Venezuela's Amazonian border. My country has attached very special importance to the preservation of nature. Fully 17 per cent of our territory consists of specially protected national parks in which economic activities are closely monitored and restricted. On the southern border, in particular, we have had the support of scientific organizations and universities in the establishment of the Alto Orinoco-Casiquiare Biosphere Reserve, covering an area of 60,000 square kilometres. In this zone, by law, economic activities must be compatible with the fragility of the tropical forest ecosystem. Particular importance is attached to the cultural and linguistic heritage of the indigenous peoples, whose way of life has always been compatible with preservation of the environment.

Over the past five years, unfortunately, we have undergone a true invasion whose results are disastrous for the environment and which has introduced a climate of violence hitherto unknown in the area.

The cause is illegal mining, which, while taking advantage of the forested and inaccessible nature of Amazonia, is destroying rivers and whole hectares of vegetation. This phenomenon has reached a scale large enough to cause concern, to the point that it is escaping control by the States. Just recently - last July - illegal miners massacred a group of Venezuelans, of the Yanomami tribe. Brazil and Venezuela, where the criminal act was carried out, have established an ad hoc commission to investigate the facts and to make sure that the criminals are punished. But the fact that these events can occur gives a clear idea of the seriousness of the situation we are facing in Amazonia. Trees are being cut down, the sources of our great rivers are being deforested, the waters of the great tropical forest are being polluted with mercury and the indigenous population, the original inhabitants of the region, are being murdered.

The Amazonian border of Venezuela, 2,200 kilometres long, has been preserved. On our side there is the biosphere reserve, and in Brazil there is the Yanomami park, established in 1992 and covering 94,000 square kilometres. Nevertheless, the deaths of the indigenous Venezuelans show that violence and destruction are beginning to penetrate these protected areas. Illegal mining is a business behind which are the gold and diamond transnationals that arm them, provide them with machinery and build landing strips in the forest. They are deforesting Amazonia. Each year an area of forest the size of Portugal is destroyed. They are wiping out plants and animals: it is estimated that 1,200,000 species will disappear in the next 25 years. They are annihilating the local population, and this in 1993, when the whole world is commemorating the International Year for the World's Indigenous People.

Therefore, Venezuela addresses the international community to denounce this serious environmental situation. All the countries of the Amazon Basin have clearly proclaimed our sovereignty over the land in question. Amazonia belongs to us, but we have the responsibility to protect it, now and for future generations. We must work together to preserve our tropical forest. Each country in the region is making special efforts to take up the challenge of sustainable development in this zone where the ecological balance is so precarious. We particularly welcome the establishment in Brazil of the Ministry of the Environment and the Conservation of Amazonia, which will undoubtedly be an important factor in solving the problem. Only open and sincere dialogue between the countries of the region will enable us to resist the gold and diamond multinationals that are destroying, without regard for morality, this important part of the heritage of mankind.

We must live up to the environmental commitments entered into at the Rio Summit. We need technical support and political, economic and social backing to confront the economic interests that are destroying our heritage. I appeal to the mining transnationals to understand that development does not mean destruction; to international agencies to help us implement the principles of sustainable development in this zone; and to the wealthiest countries to understand that, while poverty and ignorance persist among large segments of the population in Latin America, violence and environmental destruction will continue.

The United Nations has performed a monumental task in convening the Earth Summit and the Conference on Human Rights, and now the major meetings on population and social development. The resolutions adopted at these conferences are now being violated in Amazonia. Venezuela is making a great effort to ensure the preservation of the environment, often in areas to which access is extremely difficult. We are fighting for human rights among people who are not accustomed to respecting the law. We are trying to proceed in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, standing up to the companies that are seeking only to extract the wealth of the soil at a rapid pace. These are difficult tasks, but we are convinced that this effort is necessary in order to conserve our Amazonia and preserve it for future generations of our peoples and also for future generations of all mankind. The United Nations is the appropriate forum for the whole world to learn of our efforts to preserve this territory, its biodiversity and the integrity of its rightful inhabitants.

Mr. Dinesh SINGH (India): Mr. President, your unanimous election as President augurs well for the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. I extend my heartiest congratulations to you and best wishes for success.

Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the Secretary-General, has given a new vision and a new impetus to the United Nations at a crucial time in its history. We wish him well in his efforts.

My Government is deeply touched by the sympathy and compassion expressed by the leaders of several delegations on the devastating earthquake in India on 30 September 1993, and, with your permission, Mr. President, I shall have to go back to India immediately.

The United Nations will soon be 50 years old. It has had many achievements to its credit: decolonization; efforts to alleviate poverty; peace-keeping; disarmament; devising an accepted code of international law; respect for human rights and concern for the environment. I would like to reiterate India's faith in and consistent support for the United Nations and its efforts to establish peace and the well-being of peoples. We take note that the United Nations is trying to evolve so as to better serve the principles and purposes of the Charter. We support the Secretary-General's efforts to make what he has called a transition from the old to the new United Nations, which would be particularly useful and fruitful for the less developed and less fortunate States.

The euphoria generated by the end of the cold war has in the past two years given way to concerns about the difficulties of achieving a new global equilibrium and stability. Essentially, we can see these difficulties arising from the contradictory pulls and pressures exerted by the forces of positive integration and harmony on the one hand and fragmentation and discord on the other.

The end of the divisions of the cold war and the efforts to halt and reverse the arms race have generated some of the integrative forces. Some forces of integration have also been at work in the global economy, which has been characterized by the globalization and interdependence of countries' factors of production and of issues of trade, money, finance, technology, environment, population and development. The desire of the developing countries to participate more actively in the growth of the world economy and the building-up of free-market, liberalized economies for themselves adds another positive dimension. Issues of common concern and global survival - economic development and regeneration, environmental sustainability, demographic management, technological dynamism and health for all - have provided a sense of common destiny. The communications revolution has resulted in greater cultural intermingling and openness around the world.

These forces of integration are, unfortunately, opposed by those of fragmentation. Represented by sectarian and subnational aggression, racism, religious fundamentalism, bigotry, terrorism, drug trafficking and arms smuggling, they pose a threat to peace, global security, democracy, human rights and economic and social development. We are also witnessing strife, conflicts and cruel, unceasing and irrational civil wars in many parts of the world. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia and Afghanistan cause us anxiety and concern. The proliferation of such local conflicts and the ever-increasing flow of refugees across national frontiers reaffirm the truism that peace, like freedom, is indivisible and that the disruption of peace anywhere is a danger to peace everywhere.

These divisive forces have caused not only political instability but also economic collapse in several instances. Conversely, economic sluggishness and lack of development in several cases have led to political upheavals. Inward-looking, exclusivist and narrowly self-centred global economic policy-making has been in evidence at a time when the global economy is overshadowed by recession and lack of dynamism. Macroeconomic coordination is at its weakest. Protectionist tendencies are strong. The potential of developing countries to act as vigorous engines of growth for revitalizing the world economy stands largely ignored. In developing countries, absolute and deepening poverty, hunger and malnutrition, disease, illiteracy and the lack of shelter and sanitation for a large portion of the population have caused political and social tensions. The structural imbalances and flaws of the post-Second-World-War international economic order persist and prevent the maximization of the benefits of interdependence and globalization.

Against this backdrop, the task of the United Nations should be to construct a new global equilibrium by fostering positive integrative forces and discouraging, if not counteracting, the forces of fragmentation and discord. For this, the new United Nations will have to reiterate the fundamental and immutable principles on which it was built: respect for the national sovereignty, territorial integrity and sovereign equality of nation States. I am glad that the Secretary-General stated in his report to the forty-eighth session:

> "National sovereignty is the art of rendering unequal power equal. Without State sovereignty, the very instrument of international cooperation might be destroyed and international organization might itself become impossible." (*A/48/1, para. 16*)

The United Nations will have to set an example for the conduct of relations amongst nation States on the basis of respect for the rule of law, democracy and pluralism. Any international framework, whether it be associated with peace or development, must be transparent and must deal with issues of global concerns on a non-selective and non--discriminatory basis.

In the final analysis, the institutions, concepts and agencies that represent the new world order will be judged by their ability to harness and channel the beneficial and creative forces of integration for the benefit of peace and development for all and by the ability of the United Nations to ensure that the interests of its weaker Member States are fully reflected therein. In these still perilous times, they would have to promote development cooperation and effectively arrest the plunge into insecurity, strife and chaos, particularly when these threaten the very foundation of Member States, where ultimately the United Nations is rooted.

There have been references in this Assembly to all these conflicts, big or small, local or with international dimensions, describing them in the generic terms of ethnic, religious and civil wars. The plurality and complexity of our post-cold-war world do not permit such generic labelling. Nor are these conflicts amenable to generic and instant remedies. A number of instances of strife or aberrations are part of the historical legacies inherited by Member States. Each is posited in a different socio-economic and cultural matrix of causation; each is caught up in a different cycle of circumstance and violence. The imposition of peace through unilateral external intervention will only perpetuate situations embodying the Orwellian logic of "peace is war" that we see in many parts of the world today.

Wisdom lies in overcoming conflict situations with a positive vision animated by peace and amity and in creating the necessary confidence and will for peace among countries and peoples. It is in this spirit that India is ready to initiate a dialogue with Pakistan to build mutual confidence and to promote a climate of stability in our region. I can only hope that Pakistan will respond to this, and have a dialogue with us, instead of trying to go around the world accentuating differences that will be difficult to resolve later.

We welcome the recently concluded peace accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and earnestly hope that this will be a true harbinger of further positive developments aimed at establishing lasting peace and prosperity in West Asia. We also welcome the announcement by Mr. Nelson Mandela that irreversible progress towards a non-racial, democratic South Africa has been made. In response to his suggestion, India, which had imposed trade sanctions against South Africa as early as 1946, has initiated action to lift those sanctions and to normalize relations with South Africa.

We trust that the recognition by the Security Council of the international boundary between Iraq and Kuwait will contribute to the stabilization of the situation in the Gulf region. We hope that the faithful implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions will lead to the alleviation of the present difficulties of the peoples of the region.

In Somalia, a whole population has gone through a protracted civil war and famine with hardly any governmental machinery to tackle the situation. This made it imperative for the United Nations to act. As an unprecedented humanitarian mission, the multilateral action in Somalia enjoyed the support of the entire world, including the factional Somali leaders themselves. India, for its part, has contributed one of the largest contingents to this mission. Now that the situation has improved and starvation has been averted, the United Nations operation faces new problems. It is necessary for the United Nations to reassure all sectors of the people of Somalia about its role in the country, intensify the process of political reconciliation and adhere strictly to the original objectives of the mission.

The phenomenal increase in peace-keeping operations in the post-cold-war period and their inclusion as an element of the new agenda for peace is at once a matter of comfort and concern. It is a matter of comfort because the United Nations at long last has started playing its Charter role in the area of peace and security. In the altered international political environment, we would like the United Nations to realize its full potential. At the same time, the involvement of the United Nations on an unprecedented scale with peace-keeping operations causes us concern because operationally the United Nations is not fully prepared and equipped to discharge this role effectively. And, legally and conceptually, the limits, procedures and rules of the involvement of the United Nations are not clearly defined.

For peace-keeping operations to be successful, it is necessary to follow certain guidelines and criteria. All avenues of pacific settlement of disputes, as laid down in Chapter VI of the Charter, should be fully explored and exhausted before resorting to peace-keeping operations under Chapter VII. Decisions on such operations should be taken in a democratic and broad-based manner, and after thorough consideration of all aspects. To command universal endorsement and maintain their non-partisan character, United Nations peace-keeping operations must be based on the consent of all the States parties to a dispute. They should be undertaken with a specific mandate and a clear time-frame. Greater efficiency should be achieved in both planning and execution of peace-keeping operations. The Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, in his address to the General Assembly a few days ago, put forward a few proposals in this respect which merit consideration by the General Assembly. The concept of invoking humanitarian relief as a basis for peace-keeping operations may have to be approached with a great deal of caution and circumspection. Any new United Nations operation for providing humanitarian relief must be completely non-partisan - in fact and in the perception of the parties involved.

That consideration must also guide any discussion or decision on preventive deployment. The United Nations must not allow itself to be burdened indefinitely with obsolete and ineffective peace-keeping operations. Every possible measure should be taken to ensure the safety of peace-keeping personnel.

Another aspect of the agenda for peace which we would like to underline is the particular importance we attach to Article 50, which enjoins the Security Council to find solutions to the special economic problems faced by third States on account of the implementation of sanctions imposed by the Security Council. We call for an automatic mechanism that would put remedial action in place simultaneously with the imposition of sanctions.

An integral element of any agenda for peace in our time is the achievement of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. Having endorsed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the United Nations should move on to consider similar steps in other areas of disarmament.

We welcome the unilateral decision of the United States to extend its moratorium on nuclear testing until the end of 1994. The focus of the nuclear-weapon Powers should now be on the early conclusion of a universal, verifiable and comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty leading to the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

India's commitment to non-proliferation is complete and unequivocal. India has an unblemished track record. India's proposal made in 1988 for an action plan for nuclear disarmament within a specific time-frame is of continuing relevance in our bid to rid the world of the global scourge of nuclear weapons. We believe that a new, just and uniformly applicable regime for non-proliferation which does not discriminate between the nuclear-weapon and the non-nuclear-weapon States should be considered at an early date. Such a treaty should place equal obligations on all States. For a non-proliferation regime to be truly meaningful, it must also address the questions of a convention on the non-use of nuclear weapons, a verifiable freeze on the production of fissionable material, a total ban on nuclear-weapon tests and negotiations on general and complete disarmament. The global spread and reach of nuclear weapons reduce to a travesty the objective of achieving genuine peace and security within a narrow regional framework. It is our hope that the United Nations will take firm action in this direction to achieve this in the sense I have mentioned.

One area of concern for developing countries is the question of ad hoc and unilateral export controls and other restrictions being placed on the transfer of dual-use and high technology with the ostensible purpose of curbing proliferation. Non-proliferation concerns must not be made a pretext for denying developing countries access to technologies critical for their development. There is, therefore, need to evolve multilateral, non-discriminatory and transparent arrangements to regulate the transfer of such technologies so that peaceful uses and dissemination of some key technologies are not denied to the developing world.

There is perhaps merit in convening a special session on disarmament to examine the whole gamut of disarmament-related issues that arise in the new context of today. The question of a peace dividend arising from disarmament in the form of financial and technical resources for the enhancement of international development cooperation in the context of the United Nations could be one of the issues that special session could address.

It is obvious that there can be no global security unless development is ensured, and we therefore attach as much importance to an agenda for development as to the "Agenda for Peace". Agenda 21 of the Rio Declaration, outlining the plan and programme for global cooperation in ensuring sustainable development; the outcome of the Final Act of the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD VIII), on the partnership for development between the North and the South; and the forthcoming Conference on Population and Development, as well as the World Summit on Social Development, provide the international community enough opportunity to promote economic and social development and environmental sustainability, particularly in developing countries. The work on an agenda for development should build on all these development-related action programmes and provide a new impetus to development cooperation, both under United Nations auspices and in bilateral and other multilateral contexts. Enhancement of the role, resources and capabilities of the organs and agencies dealing with development in the United Nations system should be stressed. The United Nations should also be enabled to have a more interactive relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions in a spirit of finding considered and innovative solutions to global economic problems and pooling all available resources for that purpose.

Comprehensive and constructive dialogue between the North and the South and the strengthening of a global partnership for development are the needs of our times if we are to avoid the replacement of the East-West divide by a North-South one. India has always participated in the ongoing North-South dialogue through the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement and in keeping with the requirements of a more focused dialogue. India has become part of the new group of 15 developing countries for South-South consultation and cooperation, the G-15. We are acting as host to the fourth summit meeting of that group at New Delhi in December. Representing the developing countries, we have had a promising start through an informal dialogue with the G-7 and we hope to build on those beginnings in a spirit of "global partnership for global benefit", as was stated by my Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao in his message to the G-7 Chairman.

Some key issues where there is an ongoing dialogue but which none the less need further consideration and implementation include: participation of developing countries in global macroeconomic coordination and decision-making; reciprocation by the North of the efforts of the South at restructuring and economic liberalization through the pursuit of expansionist policies conducive to long-term growth and opening them up to global competition in goods, services and manpower through reduction and elimination of protectionist barriers; increased capital flows, both official and private, bilateral and multilateral, to developing countries to offset the crippling effects of the debt burden and to accelerate growth and development; and a balanced, successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, which should ensure substantial enhancement of market access for developing-country exports and of their access to the tool of competitiveness.

The profoundly humanistic traditions of the Indian civilization, with its emphasis on tolerance, harmony, non-violence and the inviolability of the individual, have found their modern expression in the setting up of a democratic, secular and egalitarian polity and society in free India.

Being the largest practising democracy and effecting a synthesis between a multiplicity of ethnic, religious and linguistic groups and peoples has been no easy task, as some in the West are themselves realizing even in the context of their relatively lesser diversities. The Constitution of free India consolidated this humanistic tradition and is indeed a veritable bill of human rights. A strong and independent judiciary and a totally free press have also been watchdogs of democracy and human rights in India.

India's commitment to the effective protection of human rights has now received another institutional impetus with the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission comprised of a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India, a retired judge of the Supreme Court of India, a former Chief Justice of the State High Court and other eminent persons as well as the chairmen of the three separate national commissions which already exist to protect the interests of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women and minorities. The Commission has been mandated to inquire into allegations of violations of human rights and has been invested with wide-ranging powers, including the power to establish special investigation teams to carry out effective investigations. The findings of the Commission are to be published from time to time besides being reflected in its annual report, which will also be laid before Parliament. The law also provides for the establishment of human rights commissions by the State Governments, on the pattern of the national Commission, as also special courts for the speedy trial of cases involving human rights violations.

I am confident that members of the Assembly will accept that India has established the most appropriate human rights commission to ensure that there will be full human rights protection in the country.

Our commitment to universally acceptable non-discriminatory norms of human rights and their protection and promotion cannot be questioned. It was in that spirit that we participated actively in the World Conference on Human Rights, which recognized the importance of this issue. We are however pained that not enough emphasis is put on a major threat and impediment to the realization of human rights, namely, terrorism, especially the kind that is aided and abetted by one State against another. Why is it that a few so-called human rights advocates and Member States of the United Nations choose to focus on the human rights of terrorists - those who indulge in senseless murder, destruction, pillage, the disruption of civilized existence and the undermining of democratic institutions? Why do they virtually turn a blind eye to the violation of the human rights of the victims of such terrorism - innocent civilians or those upholding law and order and the territorial integrity of States? Can they in true conscience allow terrorists and their supporters to usurp the moral high ground on human rights?

The United Nations will have to take strong action against terrorists because terrorists engage in all kinds of violence. They try to upset democratically taken decisions in a country by using force and killing people. This must be totally condemned by the United Nations and stopped completely so that people can live in peace and in democracy and express their views in accordance with the constitution of their country.

In sum, we believe that international cooperation in the protection of human rights can succeed only if it is within the framework of respect for the sovereignty and integrity of States and of a vigorous global programme for anti-terrorist action. We would, however, like to point out that any unilateral use of human rights as an instrument of political pressure or intervention, or as an obstacle to trade or a condition for development cooperation and aid, in fact serves the opposite purpose and impedes the full realization of the human rights of people of affected countries.

The enhanced role of the United Nations in international affairs calls for the restructuring and redefining of the functions of its principal organs.

The responsibilities of the Security Council have grown dramatically in the past few years, requiring a greater degree of participation by the overall membership of the United Nations in the Council's decision-making process. We must recognize that the membership of the United Nations has grown enormously over the years. A more balanced and expanded representation for Member States in the Council is therefore inevitable. Unity of purpose among its members rather than size determines the efficiency of any organization. The expansion should not be done selectively or in a piecemeal manner. The principles or criteria of expansion of the permanent and non-permanent membership should be agreed upon by consensus. For the selection of additional States in an expanded Council, the population - which represents the principle of democracy and an element of power - the size of the economy and the future potential of the countries concerned should be taken into account, along with equitable geographical distribution and the contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security. There is virtual unanimity among those who have responded to the Secretary-General that an expansion of the Council is imperative. Interesting suggestions have been put forward by several countries. The logical next step would be to start a process of consultations to arrive at a suitable and fair formula that commands universal support.

The permanent members should be responsive to the aspirations of developing countries represented in the General Assembly on the basis of equality. It is therefore essential also to revive the role of the General Assembly, as was originally envisaged in the Charter.

We stand on a decisive threshold incomparable to any in history, a moment in time when we must bring to bear a larger vision and foster the forces of positive integration, democracy and cooperation at national and international levels.

My Prime Minister has, in characterizing the 1990s as watershed years in global affairs in the realm of political, economic and environmental challenges and changes, conveyed an unequivocal message:

> "We cannot go wrong if we make coexistence and peace our watchword, and common universal good our objective".

It is my Government's belief that this quest for the common good, jointly undertaken, will be central to the success of our endeavour and for the achievement of the Charter's objective of harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

Mr. PAPACONSTANTINOU (Greece): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to extend to you the warmest congratulations of the Greek Government on your election to the presidency of the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Your distinguished personal qualities and diplomatic skills augur well for the progress of work of the current session.

I should be remiss if I did not express the deep appreciation of the Greek Government to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the most distinguished way in which he has been discharging his high duties. His dynamism, energy, perseverance, political will and leadership, together with a determined vision of the new world structure, constitute invaluable and solid foundations for a more efficient and creative United Nations response to the challenges of the close of the twentieth century. He has our full support.

Let me also join previous speakers in welcoming, from this rostrum, the new Members that have been admitted to the United Nations this year.

We were deeply shocked by the tragic news of the devastating earthquake in India, which has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives. I express, on behalf of the Greek Government and of the Greek people, our sincere sympathy for the families of victims and for the friendly people of India.

Earlier this week, the Foreign Minister of Belgium, in his capacity as President of the Council of the European Community, delivered a statement on behalf of the European Community and its 12 member States. My Government fully subscribes to its content.

An unprecedented and historic event has enhanced hopes for the peoples living in the Middle East. Israelis and Palestinians have made a courageous step, in Washington, towards peace. Greece, together with its European Community partners, offers its full support for keeping the present momentum so that the parties involved may soon reach comprehensive and lasting agreements. We have always taken the stand that peace in the Middle East could be achieved through direct dialogue between all the parties. The Prime Minister of Greece, Mr. Mitsotakis, addressing the General Assembly in 1981 in his capacity as Foreign Minister stressed, *inter alia*, that:

> "The prolongation of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the failure of all unilateral attempts to resolve it demonstrate that only dialogue among the parties, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, can lead to a just and lasting solution." *(A/36/PV.16, p. 17)*

We are extremely satisfied that these historic, direct talks have paved the way to peace.

In today's global political landscape, the international community must address many challenges that are neither familiar nor simple. Troubling developments in areas with varying political and economic conditions are affecting millions of people who are caught in a circle of violence and suffering. Millions face starvation. We must take heart, however, from the determination of peoples in all parts of the world to sustain freedom and human rights, and to choose their futures even in the face of declining output, rising unemployment and inflation. In the quest for a better world, for a better future, man is striving to improve his social, economic and political institutions.

The future of mankind is inextricably linked to the way in which we have lived and acted during the twentieth century and, in particular, during the last four decades. During this period the international community had rested its hopes on the United Nations system in order to address the challenges of modern society. Our Organization has stood the test of time. It has offered us a valuable service in the fields of peace and security. It has also helped us, to a great extent, in our common endeavours towards eliminating injustice, economic imbalances and social disparities, and in safeguarding the environment.

We firmly believe that all Members of the United Nations, together, have a moral obligation to act in order to ensure a better future for mankind. Previous speakers have duly stressed the need to react jointly to the challenges.

In this respect, allow me to announce that the Government of Greece, eager to contribute towards this end, has the honour to propose the convening in Greece, in January of the year 2000, of an international United Nations summit aimed at adopting a global agenda for the twenty-first century. The general topic of this summit conference could be "Partners for a Better World: on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century". An ad hoc preparatory committee or an open-ended working group of the whole could be established by this body to cope with the substance and the organizational aspects of the summit. Greece expresses its willingness and readiness to work bilaterally and collectively towards the realization of this United Nations summit conference. I might add that, after all, Greece was the cradle of the democracy that humanity as a whole now enjoys. It is the right place to hold the summit proposed by the Greek Government.

We are living through a period of radical changes, especially in Europe. Former adversaries are now cooperating on the basis of common values and principles. Historical agreements have been reached in arms control and arms reduction, both regionally and globally.

These changes have also brought new risks and uncertainties: the proliferation of new States; the reappearance of claims of numerous national minorities suppressed under communism, and with them the danger of disputed borders; and, on top of these, the economic collapse and heavy transition costs in the former communist countries, as well as the re-emergence of nationalism, national antagonisms, religious fanaticism and populist tendencies. All of these issues have set the stage for a new approach to the question of security and stability in Europe, which has emerged as the major issue of political importance in the old continent. Let me also emphasize that security in Europe is linked to the economic development and maturity of the democratic process and institutions in Eastern Europe, the Balkan peninsula and the Maghreb. Uncontrolled and unlimited migration resulting from political turmoil and economic hardship in these countries could cause social and economic problems affecting even the more prosperous countries in Western Europe.

The significance of the United Nations in maintaining peace has grown dramatically. It is enough to compare the 13 peace-keeping operations undertaken during the first 42 years of its existence with the same number of operations established between 1991 and 1992. Only last week the Security Council decided to establish two new peace-keeping operations in Haiti and in Liberia.

The prestige, credibility and power of the United Nations have been enhanced by the positive outcome of the peace-keeping operations. However, the United Nations system was not ready to cope with such an extended challenge, and there seems to be a consensus that United Nations methods and capabilities need to be adjusted and improved. More effective ways to prevent and contain conflicts have been considered by the United Nations, world leaders and respected think-tanks. The Secretary-General's "An Agenda for Peace" has stimulated the ongoing discussions and has already resulted in the adoption of a series of measures.

Greece strongly supports the United Nations peace-keeping operations, as well as peace-building and peacemaking activities. Our presence in Somalia, Iraq, Kuwait and Western Sahara indicates our increasing involvement in peace-keeping. In this context, I should also mention our contribution to the United Nations polling officers unit in Cambodia and in other parts of the world.

Cyprus, a member of the United Nations, still remains occupied and divided. Thirty thousand Turkish troops occupy 38 per cent of the Republic. What is more, thousands of settlers from the mainland have upset the demographic balance of the population. We note with deep concern a complete lack of progress towards a solution of the Cyprus problem during this year. In spite of the efforts of the Secretary-General and his representatives, talks in New York and in Cyprus came to a standstill because of the unwillingness of the Turkish Cypriot leadership to engage in meaningful negotiations either on the overall agreement or on confidence-building measures. We join the Secretary-General's call to Turkey to fully assume its responsibilities and exercise its decisive influence with the Turkish-Cypriot leaders in order to achieve progress.

The recent breakthrough in the Middle East has proved that there are no intractable problems, if there is a political will. This genuine will is required from Ankara in order to re-establish the sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of Cyprus, while guaranteeing and protecting the rights of all its citizens. Here, I would remind the Assembly that the question of the missing persons has not been resolved. Greece will maintain its constructive attitude in the hope that it will be reciprocated. My Government this year increased its contribution to the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus to $6.5 million, as evidence of our strong commitment to achieving a political settlement while safeguarding peace in Cyprus.

We follow with particular attention the tireless efforts of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to achieve decisive reforms to consolidate the democratic institutions and establish an open market economy. We sympathize with their calls for assistance. We participate in all initiatives to promote a smooth integration of the newly established States into international institutions. The consolidation of democratic institutions and processes in Russia is of the utmost importance for Europe and for my country in particular.

An eloquent example of the upheaval brought about by the dramatic changes in Europe is the situation in the former Yugoslavia. Here, and especially in Bosnia, the upheaval has turned into a tragedy of unprecedented proportions. No matter how much we contribute to prevent and ease the suffering of the people, there is no remedy unless and until a political solution has been agreed upon by all parties. Their leaders should understand that continued fighting increases hatred and decreases the chances of a compromise, and should seize any acceptable opportunity for peace for the sake of their people. The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia have exercised all their ingenuity to convince those leaders of these simple truths. They have consistently tried to guide negotiations towards the principles of the London Conference. Cyrus Vance, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen deserve our gratitude for their tremendous efforts.

Greece, along with its European Community partners, plays a constructive role in the search for a negotiated overall settlement. We were close to an agreement last May after the Athens meeting, for which the Greek Government and particularly the Prime Minister, Mr. Mitsotakis, worked hard. Let us hope that the present chance will not be missed.

When an agreement is reached in Bosnia, we must take an active part in the huge task of the reconstruction of the former Yugoslavia. We propose to start planning for this task right now. The main responsibility lies with the European Community. Greece expresses its readiness to host an international meeting for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the former Yugoslavia, with the participation of donors, as well as of neighbouring countries. Substantial economic and financial assistance is the prerequisite for achieving social harmony and consolidating democracy. Let us hope that peace will be achieved sooner rather than later. Serious consideration should be given now to planning for the day after peace is achieved.

May I remind the Assembly that the agreement between the Israelis and the Palestinians came very suddenly. Only now is the international community thinking of ways to assist the region to recover and achieve economic reconstruction and rehabilitation. Let us not be late in the case of the former Yugoslavia. If we act right now, we act on time. The day after should be taken into serious consideration by all concerned, and especially by the European Community and the neighbouring States.

My Government deeply appreciates the efforts of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in accordance with Security Council resolution 817 (1993). We thank Mr. Vance for agreeing to continue these efforts in accordance with Security Council resolution 845 (1993). The resolution of this problem will enhance stability in the Balkan region. Greece's position is clear: we are striving to eradicate a potential point of friction in the Balkans, friction which may lead to tension with unpredictable and perhaps grave consequences.

On this occasion I reiterate our earnest desire to strengthen, as far as possible, our relations with all our neighbours. We have pursued this policy consistently. To this purpose, we will continue our efforts to enable our northern neighbours to accomplish the difficult task of reconstructing their economies. The Balkan economies are inextricably interdependent; we need the cooperation of our northern neighbours in order to link further our economies with those of the Central, Northern and Western European

States. So our neighbours need the cooperation of Greece in order to integrate their economies with the European Community as well as to have access to the trade routes of the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

Greece is fully aware of the need to assist, and has already enormously assisted, Albania in overcoming its considerable economic difficulties and consolidating its democratic institutions. At the same time, we again urge the Albanian Government to grant in practice the fundamental minority rights established within the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, particularly in the fields of education and religion. Religious freedom and the right to education should not be denied to the Greek minority nor to any minority anywhere in the globe. Albania cannot deny to the minorities within its borders what it itself asks for its minorities abroad.

The elimination of weapons of mass destruction, including in particular nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, is a goal towards which, despite progress achieved, we must persevere. The signing of the chemical-weapons Convention on 12 January 1993 was an important step. We look forward to the Conference of 1995 for an unconditional and indefinite renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We also note with satisfaction the progress made towards the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna last June, has led to the emergence of common views and strategies involving large sectors of our societies and to prospects for better cooperation between the institutions and organizations active in this area.

We hope that the vicious circle of violence in South Africa will end soon, with the cooperation of all South African leaders, and that a new political system will be born. Greece, along with its European Community partners, intends to play a constructive role in assisting that country in its transition to majority rule.

In Somalia, the United Nations embarked upon the first peace enforcement operation to secure a safe environment for humanitarian operations, disarm militia and pursue the difficult task of political recovery. Pacification has been accomplished to a large extent though serious problems remain. As a troop contributor to the United Nations Operation in Somalia, Greece firmly believes that this operation should not be allowed to fail.

Greece and its European Community partners maintain a fruitful dialogue in both political and economic matters with the countries of Latin America. This dialogue will be continued with great interest at the San Jose and Rio ministerial meetings, which will take place next year under the Greek presidency of the European Community and in Greece.

In many of the poorest developing countries, standards of living continue to decline, while in other developing countries the results of economic performance are, to say the least, mixed. Thus, some economies in Asia are vibrant. Latin America, with the debt crisis behind it, has pursued successful structural adjustment programmes. On the other hand, in half of the developing world the picture remains bleak. It is particularly so in Africa. The needs are compelling.

We share the view that growth should be sustainable in that it creates more employment, less poverty and greater equality of opportunity, and also in that it promotes human freedom and the preservation of the environment. Successful national policies are necessary to bring about greater participation by the people in economic, social and political life.

In concluding my statement, I appeal to every Member, not only in my capacity as Foreign Minister of Greece, but also as a man who wants to see his grandchildren live in a different, better world - a world of tolerance, peace and solidarity. Let us join our efforts and share our experience for a better tomorrow. Let us be tolerant of each other in order to ensure a better life for our children and for their children. Let us ensure that solidarity and partnership prevail over sterile antagonism, micronationalism and totalitarian ideologies and regimes. Let us work together to eliminate war, famine, genocide, "ethnic cleansing", holocaust, xenophobia, racism and aggression.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.